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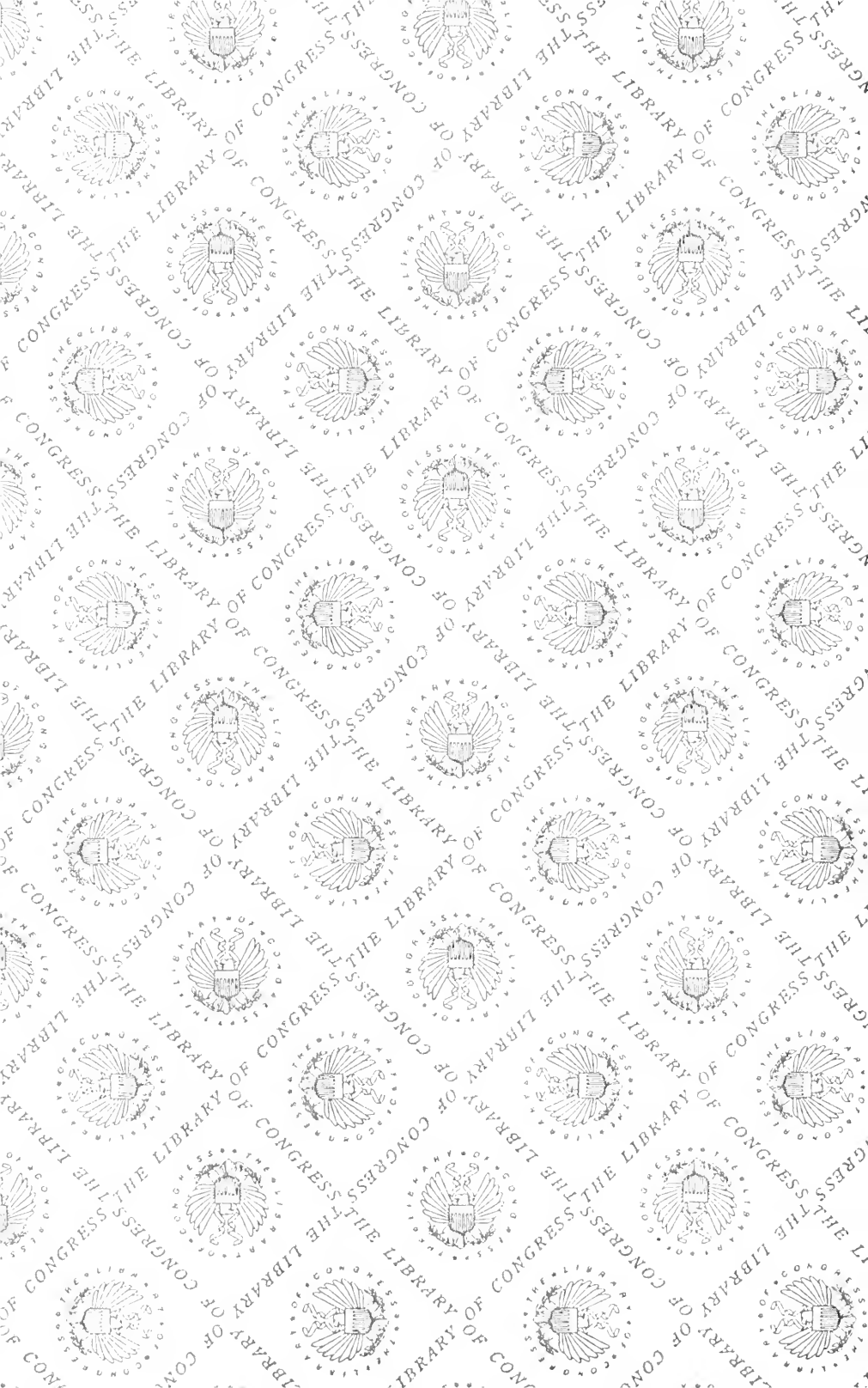
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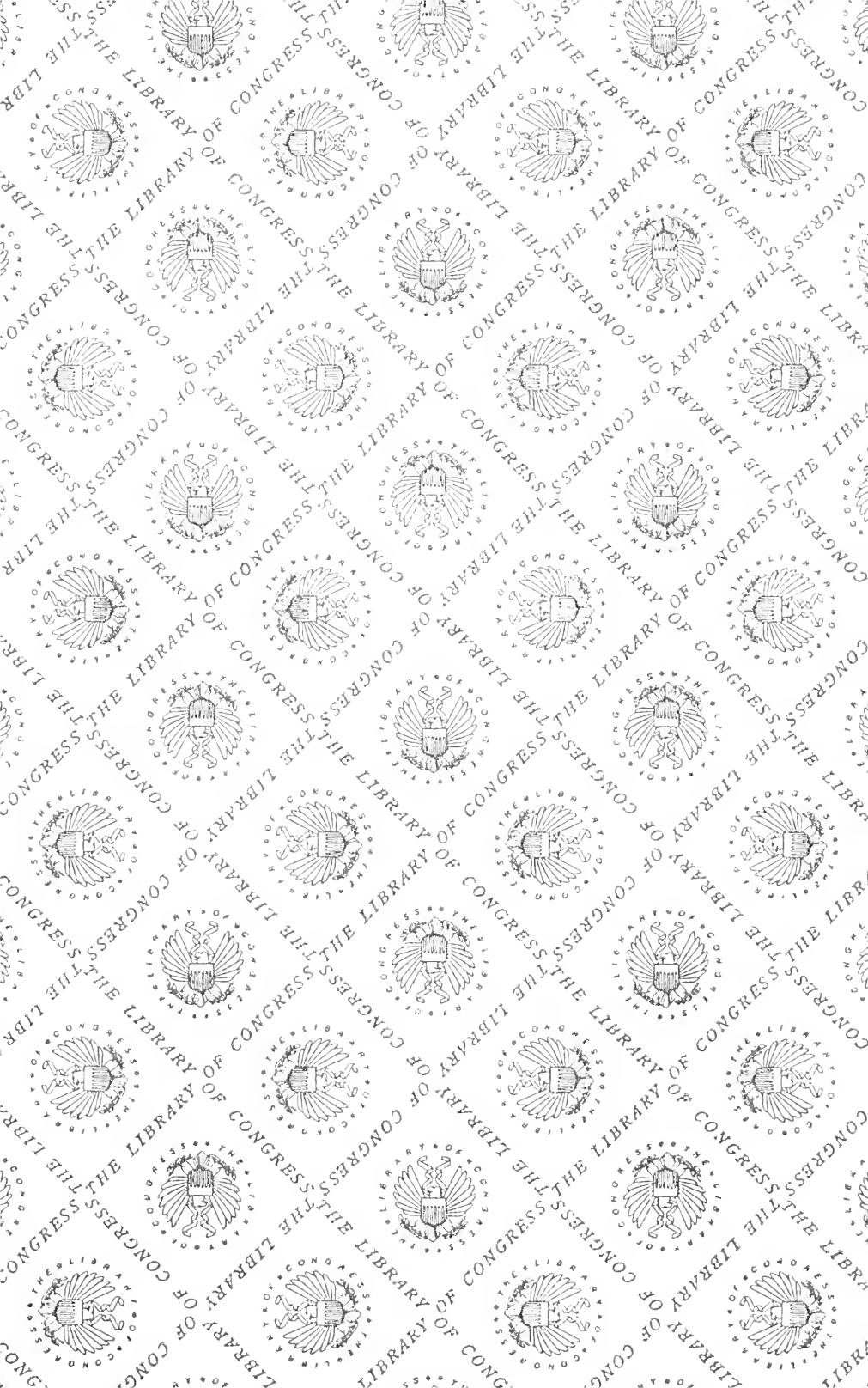
1884

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PIQUE.

A PLAY OF TO-DAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

AUGUSTIN DALY.

AS ACTED AT DALY'S NEW FIFTH AVENUE THEATRE FOR
THE FIRST TIME, DECEMBER 14TH, 1875.



NEW YORK:
PRINTED AS MANUSCRIPT ONLY, FOR THE AUTHOR.

1884.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ AND ORIGINAL CAST.

MATTHEW STANDISH, The Massachusetts Mill-owner, whose word was law	MR. CHARLES FISHER
CAPTAIN ARTHUR STANDISH, U. S. N., his son, Mr. D. H. HARKINS	
DOCTOR GOSSITT, Everybody well, but his hands full,	MR. JOHN BROUGHAM
MR. RAYMOND LESSING, To whom the ways of false love and true love are equally rough . .	MR. MAURICE BARRYMORE
SAMMY DYMPLE, A young millionaire, in search of what money can't buy	MR. JAMES LEWIS
THORSBY GYLL, His clum, with an eye, however, for Number One	MR. JOHN DREW
RAGMONEY JIM, Tramp, Victim of Emotional Insanity with respect to what belongs to other people, Mr. FRANK HARDENBERG	
PADDER, His mate. No insanity at all; knows what he wants and tries to get it	MR. WILLIAM DAVIDGE
PICKER BOB, Another. Engaged in the little job,	MR. CHARLES ROCKWELL
RATTLIN, Boatswain	MR. W. BEEKMAN
CAPTAIN SPEERS, Municipal Police	MR. I. DEVEAU
	Guests, Tramps, Sailors, Police.
MABEL RENFREW	MISS FANNY DAVENPORT
LUCILLE RENFREW, The Banker's Pretty Widow; rather young for a Stepmother, but the right age for a rival,	MISS EMILY RIGL
MARY STANDISH, "Who was passed by," . .	MISS JEFFREYS-LEWIS
AUNT DOROTHY, "Everybody's Aunt," . . .	MRS. G. H. GILBERT
RAITCH, A Waif from the Slums	MISS SYDNEY COWELL
MOTHER THAMES, The Tramps' Housekeeper .	MISS KATE HOLLAND
SYLVIE, The Foreign Maid	MISS LIZZIE GRIFFITH
LITTLE ARTHUR	BELL WHARTON

TABLEAUX.

First.—PIQUE!

The Conservatory at Grassmere on a night in August (by JAMES ROBERTS). The soft passion in every form. The choice of a husband from many lovers.

Second.—THE TWILIGHT BEFORE THE NIGHT.

THE OLD PURITAN HOME AT DEERFIELD—(By CHAS. W. WITHAM, from a study on the spot.) How the Bride was brought home, but Something was left behind.

Third.—THE PRISONER AND HER CHILD.

The Same. A mad resolve—and its consequences.

Fourth.—SEARCHING FOR THE LOST.

THE DOCTOR'S STUDY—(By LOUIS DUFLOQ.) Dymple unravels a secret deeper than the Sphinx.

FIFTH.—BEHIND TRINITY CHURCHYARD—(By JAMES ROBERTS.) The under side of a great City.

Sixth.—LURED TO THE DEN.

BEGGARS' PARADISE, Thames Street—(By LOUIS DUFLOQ.) The great web spun by crime, and a struggle in its meshes. A HAT WANTED.

Seventh.—NIGHT AND MORNING.

Parlors at the Renfrew city residence—(By JAMES ROBERTS.) Love ends where Love began.

After the First Act, one year is supposed to elapse. After the Second Act, two years. After the Third Act, one month. After the Fourth Act, one day.

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ACT I.

SCENE.—*The Conservatory at Grassmere, a country seat on the Hudson. A night in August. Music heard off, as if from parlors beyond. PADDER, a waiter, enters, R. 1 E., carrying a tray, with ices, etc. At back, company dancing.*

Padder. I wouldn't be paid to dance on such a night. Hot enough carrying these ices and iced sherries. [*Looks around.*] Glass o' wine, Padder? [*Same business.*] Thank'ee, if nobody's looking, I will! [*Same business.*] He, he. [*Empties one of the glasses.*] If I've took one of them, to-night, I've smouched a dozen.

DR. GOSSITT enters C.—type of old family physician; PAD. sees him and is embarrassed—with glass in his hand, which he finally puts in his pocket.

Doctor. [*As if heated, from ball-room.*] Whew! Thermometer eighty-eight, and rising! Ah! my good man, you come very seasonably. [*Takes an ice and begins to eat, sitting on C. seat.*]

Pad. I wouldn't like to take a contract to cool him off.

Exits C., passing LUCILLE, who enters C. R.

Doc. [*L., seated.*] Not a bad place, this, for a quiet reverie.

Lucille. [*R. C.*] No, my dear Doctor, not a bit of it. [*She comes forward; a fashionable young widow.*]

Doc. [*L.*] [*Rising quickly.*] Eh!—Oh! Not a bit of what, Mrs. Renfrew?

Luc. Of seclusion from me or my guests, hermit that you are.

Doc. At least let me have the evening to myself. To-morrow there will be work enough. First, there will be your headache—then Mabel's headache—and then the usual colics in the servants' hall, after a night of unlimited heeltaps and ice cream slops.

Luc. First, then, my dear Doctor, I shall have no headache to-morrow, because I must look after Mabel, and secondly, Mabel will be as sprightly as a lark, because—[*Pauses.*]

Doc. Because?

Luc. She is too much in love.

Doc. [L.] In love? Are you certain? Are there symptoms of the malady?

Luc. My diagnosis is perfect. She blushes at the sound of a certain voice—starts at a certain footstep—and affects the damp night air on the piazza, with a certain gentleman. [*Crosses to L. Looks off as if watching.*]

Doc. From whom I suppose she caught the infection.

Luc. Instantly. [*Crosses to L.*]

Doc. And his name?

Luc. Look behind you!

RAYMOND LESSING *crosses at back*, with MARY STANDISH *on his arm. They chat in a friendly manner, as if mere acquaintances. Both seem to be occupied with other things—both looking off to the R. constantly. They stop before a flower.*

Doc. What? Mr. Raymond Lessing? [*She nods and smiles.*] A notorious flirt.

Luc. Oh, Doctor! [*Crosses to R. at back, looking into ball-room.*]

Doc. A dawdler! A dandy! A fellow who spends most of his time at clubs and in drawing-rooms—the rest of it on the road—and all of it in mischief.

Luc. Hush, he'll hear you!

Raymond. [*To Mary.*] Fond of flowers, I perceive! [*Yawns slightly.*]

Mary. I was bred among them. And when I see them here, feel the same pity that I do for birds in a cage.

Ray. [*Listlessly.*] Ah! [*Looking off, L. U. E.*]

Mary. Look at these. They are natives of Mexico, brought here to languish in a hothouse and die for one breath of fresh, spring air.

Ray. 'Pon my word, I think they ought to be very grateful for the trouble they give. [*They stroll off.*]

Doc. Idiot!

Luc. On the contrary, I think him a most entertaining person. He has the reputation of being irresistible among the fair sex.

Doc. [L.] I have heard that he is as dishonorable and double-faced a fellow as ever made love to two women at once.

Luc. So much the worse for those foolish girls who mistake his well-bred gallantry for sincerity.

Doc. [R.] And the young lady with him is one of that sort, I suppose?

Luc. She, oh dear, no!—quite a stranger. This is her first

visit to Grassmere. A country lass—cousin of Captain Standish, whom you know.

Doc. Standish's cousin? How comes it that she is leaning on that fellow's arm?

Luc. Ignoramus! Because her cousin, the gallant Captain, is at this moment deeply engrossed with—

Doc. With whom?

Luc. Mabel.

Doc. Standish in love with Mabel? and she in love with—?

Luc. Mr. Lessing! exactly! You have the whole plot at your fingers' ends.

Doc. Where have my eyes been!

Luc. In your bottles and pill boxes, of course.

Doc. Poor Standish. [*Crosses to L.*]

Luc. Poor Mabel.

Doc. Mrs. Renfrew, you know your step-daughter better than I do, of course. But if she throws her love away on such a creature as Lessing, why—sympathy is thrown away upon her, that's all.

Luc. There are excuses for her—left without a mother—

Doc. And without a father now—two years.

Luc. When I married Mr. Renfrew, Mabel was already a young lady—her ideas formed, her will his law. I did my best.

Doc. To win her?

Luc. No. To govern her!

Doc. Humph!

Luc. It was useless. And since my widowhood—

Doc. There has been war.

Luc. Not open. A slumbering rebellion.

Doc. You must save the girl.

Luc. I wish I could. I know that Raymond—I mean Mr. Lessing—is infatuated—

Doc. Never! the cold-blooded rascal—

Luc. With her money.

Doc. Ah!

Luc. And if he knew that she is penniless—that her father died embarrassed—and that all I possessed when I married him was settled on me, why—

Doc. He would jilt her and pay all his court to you.

Luc. [*Angrily.*] Dr. Gossitt!

Doc. [*Hastily.*] Pardon me, my dear madam—I mean that he would be base enough to do it.

Luc. But Mabel would be saved.

Doc. So she would. [*Looks around.*] Excuse me—he's coming this way. [*Aside, as he is going.*] Standish in love with

Mabel. A wilful, wayward beauty; proud, vain! but he couldn't help it! such men as Standish love such girls as Mabel. The truest love the vainest. Even I feel her fascinations in the marrow of my old bones. Nothing but my rheumatism protects me. [*Exits L. 1 E., RAYMOND coming forward from R.*]

Luc. [*Sits R. C., with a slight laugh.*] I think I can safely leave the case in the hands of that sagacious old surgeon. He'll cut to the quick.

Raymond. [*R.*] Alone?

Luc. [*Gaily.*] Unusual, is it not?

Ray. Where are your hosts of admirers? The whole drawing-room was at your feet half an hour ago.

Luc. I have dismissed the court and retreated here for repose.

Ray. No—to plan how you may rule the world.

Luc. I have my moments of thought—as once, three years ago, when you met me at Geneva. Have you forgotten the little garden over the lake, the book that fell from my lap, and the cavalier who restored it?

Ray. And was rewarded by [*LUC. leans forward eagerly*] an invitation to your marriage two months after.

Luc. Capital memory! If you and I had not agreed to laugh over your disappointment, I should think you still felt revengeful, Raymond.

Ray. [*Coolly.*] In your presence, my dear Mrs. Renfrew, one can only feel the power of youth and loveliness.

Luc. [*L.*] And out of my presence you can feel a very tender regard for my step-daughter.

Ray. [*Biting his lip.*] Do you really imagine—

Luc. Do I imagine? Are you not my protégé? Have I not promised to watch over you with maternal solicitude? Do I not call you Raymond—as I would a son—and do you not address me with filial respect as—

Ray. [*Angrily.*] Lucille! [*Crosses to L.*]

Luc. [*Laughing heartily.*] Oh, fie! We agreed to forget all that little romance. I've been a widow two years. Two years is an age for a woman.

Ray. You know I have been abroad.

Luc. So have I—utterly.

Ray. And when I returned I hastened to your house.

Luc. [*Turning her face away, laughing.*] To fall in love with Mabel.

Ray. But listen to me!

Luc. [*L.*] No, I won't listen, you foolish fellow—I mean to make you happy. But let me whisper one word—you have a rival—

Ray. [*Superciliously.*] I know it. He follows her everywhere, and gets snubbed for his pains. There he is now [*looks off L.*] standing behind her chair. A sort of sentinel over his own hopeless attachment.

Luc. You feel so confident, then? [*RAY crosses to R., smiles.*] Take a friend's advice—lose no time.

Ray. [*Looks at her intently.*] And you actually aid me?—what riddles women are. [*Taking her hand.*]

Luc. [*Giving him her hand.*] Have I not told you a hundred times that I wish to see you perfectly happy. [*Seriously.*]

Ray. [*Suddenly clasping both her hands in his.*] Lucille, you—

Luc. Hush! Let me go!

Sees THORSEBY GYLL, who enters at that moment, C. L. He is a fresh University boy.

Thorsby. [*C.*] I beg pardon—I was looking for—

Luc. For me I know!

Thors. [*Aside.*] Not a bit of it. [*Aloud.*] Certainly—oh yes.

Luc. Then take me to the drawing-room.

Thors. Certainly! oh, yes! [*Aside.*] With the greatest displeasure.

Luc. [*Not looking back at Ray, but talking volubly to Thors. as they go off, C. R.*] The air was so close there—but the conservatory is so—I haven't had a waltz for an—

Thors. Certainly—oh, yes! [*Exeunt.*]

Ray. [*Looking after them.*] If I hadn't met Mabel, I should have loved that woman to distraction. But Mabel's beauty, and the fortune which all these men are pursuing! the prize is too tempting.

DYMPLE darts in at the back, C. L., and looks around. He is dressed in irreproachable costume; has red hair standing up straight; young, and with embarrassed manner.

Dymple. [*L., looking round.*] He was to meet me here at ten precisely. [*To Ray.*] I say, you haven't seen Mr. Gyll anywhere, have you? [*Familiarly.*]

Ray. [*Superciliously.*] Mr.—ah—Gyll? No! Don't know him. [*Goes up R.*]

Dym. [*Getting round to R.*] You don't? And you've been introduced to him five times to my certain knowledge. I suppose you don't know me, neither?

Ray. [*Stops and looks back.*] What say?

Dym. Nothing! [*RAY. saunters off, c. L.*] Conceited humbug. Now those are the fellows that make a man's blood boil. Always take a girl's attention away from you when you've done your best to get in her good graces. This very night, after I had got *her* all to myself, as I supposed, in a chair *I* had brought her, in a corner to which *I* had strategically manœuvred her, with an orange ice in her lap *I* had procured for her, *he* walks up, elbows me on to the edge of the piano, and whisks her off to *his* corner with *my* orange ice. I gave Thorsby the signal agreed upon for the exchange of fresh communications of the highest importance to our common interests; he telegraphed me back: "Conservatory—at ten!" here I am—and—[*looks off*] here he is.

THORSBY *entering, out of breath, c. R.*

Thorsby. I came as soon as I could. What's the news?

Dym. [*L.*] The news is, I've discovered another rival for Mabel's affections.

Thors. I know—that navy fellow who gave us the strong cigars after dinner—

Dym. And made us so sick. A plot, I'm convinced. But more of him hereafter! No, my dear boy, another still. That slim chap who don't know you, though you've been introduced to him five times.

Thors. Eight times. I managed three more after dinner to make sure he intended to be personal.

Dym. I tell you our difficulties increase. It is now three days since we came here and fell in love with her.

Thors. [*R.*] On the spot—both of us.

Dym. Yes, both of us on the same spot, for we were playing an unmanly game of leap frog under the impression that we were unobserved, and I was just going over your head when she seemed to rise out of the ground behind a clump of fuschias—

Thors. Dreadfully awkward. But she behaved like a lady.

Dym. Yes; she said she liked manly sports.

Thors. From that moment I fell in love.

Dym. And fell on me, for I was gone already.

Thors. And that afternoon we swore to win her or die.

Dym. Behind the bath-house. Sacred spot where our friendship was cemented. [*MUSIC.*]

Thors. But the next day—

Dym. The Captain turned up.

Thors. And we were turned off.

Dym. And to-night, this other fellow! I never felt so like a

born murderer [*crosses to R.*] as when I saw his sickening attentions. I tell you what it is, Thorsby, since I was let out—

Thors. Since you were let out! You talk as if you'd just come from jail.

Dym. I came from worse than jail.

Thors. Eh?

Dym. Do you happen to know what a guardian is?

Thors. I know what a father is. One who keeps you at college as if you were a malefactor and school a treadmill.

Dym. That's bad enough! But a guardian! a fellow appointed by will to see that you've no will of your own.

Thors. But ever since I met you that commencement day you've been your own master.

Dym. That's three months ago. I was free that very day.

Thors. [*L., sighs.*] With a million of money to do what you like with.

Dym. [*R.*] Hang the million! If I hadn't a cent, they'd have let me alone. But I was doomed from infancy. First I'm left an orphan with five hundred thousand dollars, and a guardian with a bald head. At ten years of age, an uncle dies and leaves me another five hundred thousand, with another guardian with another bald head, to rivet the chains of slavery upon my tender limbs.

Thors. [*Sarcastically.*] Poor fellow!

Dym. Just wait. I'm sent to school by order of guardian No. 1, and delivered to a pedagogue like a bale of cloth. Then I'm sent to college and allowanced by order of the Surrogate; then I'm taken out and put to board by order of the Supreme Court, after being claimed, reclaimed, pulled about and jerked up before a stiff, old file with spectacles in a mahogany box—on a quarrel between guardian No. 1 and guardian No. 2. Then I'm taken to Europe by a tutor, who drinks all the brandy and smokes all the cigars he can buy out of the savings on the hotel bills. Then after I've been caged, led, driven, chained and walked about like a street bear for twenty-one years, I'm brought home—a lot of books, boxes, accounts, certificates, orders and heaven knows what are stuffed in my hands, and I'm told I'm free with a million of dollars I don't know what to do with. [*Crosses to L.*]

Thors. I'd know what to do with it.

Dym. Would you? Just try it.

Thors. Just try me.

Dym. I never felt what it was to be an orphan till that day. I didn't know how to walk or talk or spend my own money. I went up to Jericho and I fell among thieves directly. I wanted

a good Samaritan—I found a dozen, who charged rather steeply for the oil they furnished. I wanted a father, and I found a score of old reprobates who brought me up to cards. I wanted a mother, and had to put up with a landlady. Then by degrees I sold myself into slavery—took a valet: a drunken rascal with a wife and eight children, who stole my shirts, got drunk, got arrested, and gave my name at the station-house, so at least once a week I had the gratification of reading in the morning papers that I had been severely reprimanded by the magistrate and fined ten dollars, which I paid on the spot.

Thors. [R.] You mean he paid.

Dym. No—I paid. He always stole enough out of my pockets to keep me out of jail. But at last I discharged him and my fooleries altogether. Then I met you, and we swore eternal friendship.

Thors. Yes; and we have agreed to wait until I graduate, and then to marry.

Dym. I know, but we have met our fate, my boy, before you graduated.

Thors. And a sad fate, if these swells cut us out as they do with Mabel.

Dym. Brains must win. We have brains. We will lay them at her feet.

Thors. [With a sigh.] You've got money, besides.

Dym. Well, your father's worth millions.

Thors. Yes; but he only allows me fifty dollars a month while I'm at college. I can't offer her that.

Dym. [L.] If she loves you, she'll wait. [Crosses to R.] Look at the disadvantage I struggle under. The reddest hair in New York.

Thors. That's not your fault. She can't blame you for that. Why don't you curl it?

Dym. I've thought of that.

Thors. Or cut it off close.

Dym. I've thought of that. But I say, old fellow, if you happen to speak to her of me, be as mild as you can on that head, won't you?

Thors. You mean on your head?

Dym. Exactly! When you come to the subject of my hair, just—just smooth it over.

Thors. I will.

Dym. Tell her the capillary adornment don't make the man. I'll do as much for you.

Thors. Thank you, Sammy. I'm not nervous on the subject of hair; but you can do me a service, you know—that is, if the

subject should happen to come up. Make me out a little older, you know. I'm afraid she looks on me as a boy. I wish I had a pair of whiskers. I think women respect whiskers. You might hint that I have to shave every morning, or I'd be a regular patriarch—eh?

Dym. [*Grasping his hand.*] I'll do it! It's a bargain! As we resolved day before yesterday—behind the bath-house—we'll win her, Thorsby, or we'll die.

Thors. She shall be ours!

DR. GOSSITT and STANDISH stroll in. THORS. and DYM. begin to hum and go R., stop suddenly as they see Mary.

Dym. Hush! Here's Miss Standish.

Thors. Pretty girl, eh? but rather young.

MARY enters, L. 1 E.

Dym. Not to be compared to our Mabel.

Mary. [*Advancing.*] Look at the beautiful bouquet Mabel gave me.

Dym. Beautiful.

Thors. Did Mabel—I mean did Miss Renfrew give you those. Why, Captain Standish gave them to her.

Doctor. [*To Standish.*] You see?

Standish. I gave those flowers to Mabel not half an hour ago.

Doc. And she gives them to your little cousin.

Mary. How I should like a stroll on the piazza. The moon is so bright. [*Strolling up c.*]

Thors. [*Quickly.*] I'll take you out.

Dym. [*Aside to Thors.*] Hem! Mabel might see you—and be jealous. Take my advice—don't spoil your chances. Women are not to be trifled with.

Doc. [*Advancing.*] Well, what are you boys plotting here? [*THORS and DYM. draw themselves up haughtily.*]

Thors. [*Indignant. To Dym.*] Boys!

Dym. [*To Thors.*] These are the kind of men who drive their fellow-men to violence. Boys! [*Sees Standish.*] There's the fellow that gave us the strong cigars.

Thors. Let's cut! He might offer them again, and we'd have to take 'em. [*Turning away they meet the Doctor, who offers cigars. They recoil in alarm.*]

Dym. We'll both go with you, Miss Mary.

Mary. Thank you. Let me say one word to Cousin Arthur first. [*Crosses to Standish; the boys whisper together.*]

Stan. [R.] Mary, did Mabel give you these flowers.

Mary. Yes. She says she dislikes flowers, except in the conservatory. But she wears two roses that Raymond Lessing gave her.

Stan. Why do you tell me that?

Mary. Are you angry with me? I know I ought not to have spoken of it.

Stan. No—not angry. Run away and enjoy yourself.

Mary. I don't dislike flowers anywhere, Cousin Arthur. May I keep these?

Stan. [Coldly.] Do as you please. Come, Doctor. [*Strolls off, R. 1 E., with Doctor.*]

Mary. He loves her, I am certain of it. Oh, why did I come here! [*Goes up, and is joined by THORS. and DYM. each side.*]

PADDER enters C. with tray of empty glasses. Very red in face and a trifle unsteady.

Padder. Beg pardon, sir

Thors. A tipsy waiter.

Pad. [*Looks at Thors. with scorn and turns to Dym*] Have an ice? [*Hic.*]

Dym. [R.] By all that's beastly, my old valet.

Thors. [L.] The fellow that always paid your fines. Treat him decently for the sake of old times.

Dym. How did you come here, you rascal?

Pad. [C.] New situation, sir! Got it after you left me, sir!

Dym. Without a character?

Pad. I knew you'd give me one, sir, for the sake of the children. So, as I couldn't find you, sir, I wrote out one for myself.

Dym. And signed my name to it?

Pad. For the sake of the children, sir.

Dym. I'll have you kicked out of the house, if you don't leave it yourself immediately.

Pad. Don't distress yourself, sir. I'll go, sir! I've no doubt the children are crying for me now. I'll go, sir! [*Aside, going R.*] But if I ever have a chance to pay you off, I'll—

Dym. Well!

Pad. Don't be harsh with me, sir, for the sake of the children! [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

Dym. That's how my misfortunes haunt me. It all comes of my being an unprotected orphan.

Thors. I tell you what it is, Sammy, you don't want a wife—you want a mother.

Mary. Come, gentlemen!
Both. Gentlemen! [*Exit, very radiant and smiling, each side of Mary, C. L., DYM., trying to offer arm, gets to R. of steps as THORS. goes up L.*]

DOCTOR, *re-entering with STANDISH, R. 1 E.*

Doctor. Does your father know of this?

Standish. [*Absently.*] My father! No! I have not written to him. I wished to be certain first.

Doc. [*L.*] You have not told me how long this has been going on.

Stan. [*Crosses to L.*] How long? I don't know. It seems to have been always so. She is my life, and I have no memories before my love of her.

Doc. You have known her only two months.

Stan. Perhaps.

Doc. Why, I brought you here.

Stan. I have to thank you for the greatest happiness and the most exquisite pain of my life.

Doc. I don't deserve any thanks. I did nothing but a common social service. You are young, generous and single. I thought you ought to have society. The very first home you stepped into becomes the abode of your destiny. It's the old story. A young fellow, fresh from hard service on the ocean, sees in the first young girl he meets in civilized life the destroying angel of his existence. Bah! Rubbish! There are hundreds more like her. [*Crosses to L.*]

Stan. And like me!

Doc. [*L.*] No—not so foolish. To follow up a girl who turns her back on you and flirts with every handsome puppy.

Stan. [*Turning quickly on him.*] I have never seen her do anything of the kind.

Doc. Not seen her turn away from you?

Stan. [*R.*] Yes! but not to—she may not love me, perhaps, but she is worthy of my love—of any man's. If sincere devotion, if unselfish attention can win her, I may try. [*Both sit.*]

Doc. [*L.*] Yes, you may try. But she has been bred in a false atmosphere. Her father lived half his life in Paris. She adores foreign life and manners. At the foot of a throne she would shine as highly as the rest of its jewels. But in our land she is a diamond buckle on a leather shoe. Let her have her preferences. Let her dazzle a peer and marry him. We have nothing to do with these women. Your father is a man of sterling worth. He rose from the masses. What would he think of such a fine lady for a daughter.

Stan. [*Impatiently, rises.*] My heart is my own! my wife is my own. Besides, you wrong my father. He would not fail to appreciate the prize I had won. Let me say a last word. You have demanded my confidence—take it all. I love Mabel Renfrew. I will suffer all that a man may to obtain her. If I fail I will descend to no lesser plane to fill the void she leaves. From the first moment I beheld her, I consecrated to her all my life. I can love her image, I can be faithful to her memory—no matter on whom she bestows the priceless treasure of her hand. [*Goes up stage.*]

Doc. I must do it then. I must help him. If she marries him she is saved! but as for him! Perhaps!

Music and laughter outside. MABEL enters C. L. on RAYMOND'S arm. LUCILLE follows shortly after with a gentleman; and afterwards MARY with THORSBY and DYMPLÉ. MABEL and LESSING come forward.]

Mabel. Oh, how delicious! And there is the doctor! [*She releases herself from Ray, and comes to Doc.*] Deserter! Your post has been vacant all the evening.

Doc. My post? Where is that?

Mabel. [*L. of Doc.*] At my side. To warn me against all my adorers. Come, you have not said a cross word against anybody to-night. I want to sit down and be lectured. [*All the gentlemen make a movement to bring her a chair. THORS. and DYM. take the same chair.*] Nobody but the Doctor. I dismiss every one. [*Styly pressing Ray's hand, and in a tender voice.*] For five minutes! is that too long?

Ray. An age! [*Goes up with Luc.; THORS. and DYM. scowl at him and retire to Mary's side.*]

Mabel. [*Sits c., to Doc.*] Now, you delightfully censorious old friend! of whom must I be afraid to-night.

Doc. Of Arthur Standish!

Mabel. [*Coldly.*] Why of Mr. Standish?

Doc. [*Close to her.*] Because he loves you.

[MABEL rises, takes a step or two to R.

Dym. [*Aside to Thors.*] Another enemy! Do you see how that old villain is making up to her. Delay is ruinous. I'll propose to-night.

Thors. So will I.

Dym. Let's get a glass of wine! I feel faint. [*They hurry out, L. 1 E.*]

Mabel. [*R., returning to seat.*] He loves me. Did he tell you so?

Doc. [*Seated c.*] Yes.

Mabel. [*R.*] Well, then, your warning is unnecessary. There is no need to fear Captain Standish, because there is not the slightest chance of my loving him.

Ray. [*On c. of steps, aside.*] What can they be talking about?

Doc. He has not told me more than you know already, Mabel. His admiration of you is open enough.

Mabel. I know nothing of his admiration and care less. My footman may admire me, and the regard of one is as indifferent to me as the other. I can't avoid the admiration of the herd. It is another thing to encourage it.

Doc. There would be nothing extraordinary in your marrying Captain Standish.

Mabel. You are going too far, Doctor. I will not hear a hint of such a thing.

Doc. He is a gentleman. His father is immensely wealthy.

Mabel. [*Contemptuously.*] He began life, I believe, as a factory overseer, or something of that kind.

Doc. And ends it as a benefactor of his kind. He comes of the grand, old Puritan stock, and is almost a king in influence in his native place. Arthur has the means of gratifying every taste—nay, every whim of your fancy. He can buy and sell again every fortune that has been offered you.

Mabel. Buy and sell. The expression, no doubt, is his own.

Doc. No, it is mine. He loves you—and—

Mabel. Proposes to buy me?

Doc. He cannot purchase your love, and is resolved to win it. I spoke of his wealth, because I know that your father left you dependent on your step-mother.

Mabel. [*Rises, crosses, in tears.*] Don't speak of poor papa! I beg of you.

Doc. I am not unkind; I wish to guide you.

Mabel. [*Drying her eyes.*] I thank you very much. Whatever my circumstances may be, they will not compel me to make a marriage for bread and a home. If I must descend, it shall be to earn my own living in some other way than by wedding below my station in life.

Doc. There is no such thing as rank in this country, Mabel. These are the false notions you gained abroad in your childhood. Which would you prefer to live on, the bounty of your step-mother, or—

Mabel. Or on that of the factory overseer! Neither!
[*Crosses to R.*]

Doc. [*Aside.*] I have evidently gone the wrong way to work.

Mabel. I would rather starve as Mabel Renfrew, than owe my life to this man.

Doc. Not if you learned to love him?

Mabel. [*Indignant.*] I love him? You are dreaming.

Doc. Mabel! be more like your poor mother—who was all gentleness and charity itself. If she were here now, she would give you the advice I offer. Do not despise the honest love of an honest man. [*MABEL is moved and takes his hand. LUC. comes forward.*]

Lucille. [*L.*] This must be a sermon.

Doc. No, it's a prayer, madam.

Mabel. [*MUSIC stops. Laughing and recovering.*] Lucille does not appreciate fine distinctions, Doctor.

Luc. [*L., crosses to Doctor.*] Oh yes, I do. [*Takes Doc.'s arm; they go up R. RAY glares furiously at Doc. and comes down to Mabel's side, L. STANDISH, leaving Mary, goes to her also. MARY joins the Doc. and Luc.*]

Ray. [*L., close to her.*] Preaching at an evening party. Did he denounce the vanities of wealth and the sinfulness of beauty? How these ugly men always go in for the virtues. [*Sits at her feet.*]

Stan. [*Behind, R. of the seat and unaffectedly.*] I rather think it becomes every man to go in a little for the virtues.

Mabel. [*With a sudden start and frown, but not looking round, then to Ray.*] Don't say anything to offend the prejudices of the "Grand old Puritan Stock," I beg of you, Mr. Lessing.

Stan. [*Leaning over her chair and gently.*] I forgive you for that, Miss Renfrew.

Mabel. [*Suddenly repenting and to him.*] Thank you, Captain Standish! I—I ought not to have said it.

Stan. [*Tenderly.*] I knew you did not mean it; your heart is too good, too noble, to wound any one.

Mabel. [*Resenting this attempt at familiarity by giving all her attention to RAY., who sits himself at her feet.*] My heart! Who pretends to read the heart of a young lady at first sight.

Ray. Man is very presuming, you know. Forgive us. We love.

Mabel. Don't jest about a sacred word.

Ray. Well, I have no presumption. I am content to wait at the portal until the goddess of the temple unfolds the mysteries to my eyes.

Mabel. Are you sure you are content to wait?

Ray. Unless by a sign—a sigh—or a glance I am encouraged

to rush in, throw myself before the shrine, and declare my boundless faith.

Stan. [*Smothering his feeling.*] True devotion uses no force. The gift of love should be a reward—not a spoil.

Mabel. [*Coolly ignoring him, and still to Ray.*] And if the goddess should remain immovable before your ardor. [*Glancing at stand.*]

Ray. Why—I think! Yes, I think I should station myself behind her back and wait until my silent entreaties turned her head. [*MABEL laughs. STAN. moves away a step, evidently pained.*] That shot told.

Mabel. Is he gone?

Ray. Not exactly routed. Retired on his wits, to try a fresh attack.

Doc. [*R., coming down to Stan.*] No use, Arthur.

Stan. Is it possible that she can be so heartless, so cruel?

Doc. Is it possible you can be such a patient ninny? Leave her to the parrot that amuses her with its chatter.

Stan. Leave her to the hawk, you mean, that has marked her for his prey. That man is a scoundrel. I know his character, and I will save her from him.

Doc. Save yourself. Awake from this dream. She will never love you.

Stan. Perhaps not. Yet at times there is such a softness in her look, a tenderness in her voice that I have dared to believe—! But this night shall decide. I will write to her—and if she refuse me—heaven bless her. She shall have a life-long friend who pities, yet loves her. [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

Doc. Soft! soft as cotton wool! and quite as inflammable. What a change has come over the world. The women are steel, and the men are putty. [*Exit, R. 1 E.*]

THORS. and DYM. appear at the back, C. L.

Dym. Now's your chance. Cut him out boldly. I'll stand by—if victory don't crown your banners, step aside and I'll—

Thors. Don't be far off.

Dym. I'll keep my eye on you.

Thors. How do I look—is my neck-tie straight?

Dym. Perfection! Don't lead the conversation to hair.

Thors. I'm not thinking of hair. I've no head for hair, just now. [*He comes down boldly, and DYM. darts behind a vase L. MABEL is whispering and laughing with Lessing. MARY and LUC. have strolled off C.*] Very pleasant here, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. [*Starting, surprised, then to Ray.*] You foolish fellow! When they all begin to dance.

Ray. I'll meet you here! [*Rises and goes off, c. R.* THORS. *sits beside her, on her L.*]

Thors. [*Embarrassed, L. of Mabel.*] Danced much this evening?

Mabel. Oh, ever so much.

Thors. I saw you! I wish—may I have the pleasure of dancing with you after supper?

Mabel. Certainly! [*Taking out tablets.*] What shall I put you down for?

Thors. [*Very sentimental, sits next to her.*] All of them!

Mabel. All of them! Oh you greedy boy!

Thors. [*Aside.*] Boy! [*Aloud.*] The fact is, Miss Mabel, when I see you standing up with anybody else, I can't keep still.

Mabel. Then you ought to get another partner, at once.

Thors. [*Same business.*] There's nobody like you.

Mabel. What a compliment. Do you have a course of galantry at Harvard, Mr. Gyll?

Thors. I hate Harvard.

Mabel. And I love it. You know I always go to commencement and to the boat race. Will you be in the crew, some time?

Thors. [*Starts up to L. and back c.*] I want to leave the old place. I'm tired of boats and books, and of being a bo—I mean a man has something else to think of. Oh! Miss Mabel, how beautiful you are!

Mabel. Why what in the world put that in your head?

Dym. [*Behind plants, L.*] Head! It's getting warm. [*Rubs his hair.*]

Thors. You did!

Mabel. Then I'm to blame for making you so naughty. You should be thinking of your books.

Thors. [*Blurting out the compliment.*] So I am. The book of beauty!

Dym. [*Aside.*] That's mine! He's stealing all my neat points.

Mabel. [*With mock seriousness*] Thorsby!

Thors. Yes, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. [*Playfully.*] You wish to make me angry.

Thors. Oh, no, I don't—Indeed I don't.

Mabel. Then be sensible. Tell me all about your studies.

Thors. I can't, I want to tell you something.

Mabel. No, you do not.

Thors. Yes, upon my honor—I'm sincere—I lo—

Mabel. Not another word.

Thors. [*Rises.*] Only half a one. Let me finish it. Please do. I love you.

Mabel. [*Crosses to L. Debating with herself how to treat him, then turns.*] Of course you do.

Thors. [*With joy.*] You believe it. Oh, thank you, Miss Mabel, and now—

Mabel. And now let me speak, as I let you.

Thors. [*Pleased.*] Yes!

Mabel. You are ever so good, and I like you very much.

Thors. Thank you, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. And because I like you, I'm going to give you some good advice.

Dym. [*Behind tree, L. Aside.*] He's dished.

Mabel. The first thing to remember, is, that you will be desperately in love a dozen times before you know your own mind. Now this is your second or third time, isn't it.

Thors. [*With a groan.*] The first.

Mabel. Well, then, there are eleven more occasions to come. The first is over, you see, and no harm done—and—I'll put you down for a waltz after supper. [*Crosses to R.*]

Thors. Farewell, Miss Mabel!

Mabel. Until eleven!

LUC. *enters to her, C. R.*

Dym. [*Seizing Thors., who is going up.*] Well!

Thors. All is over!

Dym. No, it is not. My turn next.

Thors. Go away!

Dym. No, I won't, and you shan't go away, neither—I stood by you. You just sit down and wait for me. [*THORS. drops in chair, and buries his face in his hands.*] Not that way. Look up! Smile! We are observed!

Lucille. [*To Mabel.*] Another conquest! [*Sees DYM. buttoning up his coat and approaching.*] And still they come!

Dym. May I crave a moment of your time, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. With pleasure.

Luc. [*Aside to Mabel.*] Shall I send you a partner for the valse?

Mabel. No, thank you, this will be too nice to lose! [*LUC. exits laughing, C. R.*]

Dym. [*Aside.*] She always laughs at me! [*Aloud to Mabel.*] Scorn is hard to bear, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. [*Advancing C.*] Very, I should judge.

Dym. [*Slight false start.*] May I entreat you to walk.

Mabel. Thank you, it's very pleasant here.

Dym. The proximity of the maddening throng is unfavorable to a serious proposition, Miss Mabel.

Mabel. Very. No person of sense would attempt such a thing under such circumstances.

Dym. Sense! Miss Mabel. Sense and I have long been strangers!

Mabel. You alarm me.

Dym. There are conditions in which life persists in asserting itself, while the brain and heart, and other viscera, are consumed by a devouring passion.

Mabel. What a pity.

Dym. [*With effusion.*] Miss Mabel, I know you to be one fitted to shine in any sphere. On the throne or in the peasant's cot. I cannot offer you either. But somewhere between the two is a home where you would be queen. I know my own defects—

Mabel. Impossible!

Dym. It is useless to enumerate them. The head and front of my offending—no, no, I don't mean that—my chief drawback [*She looks at his head*] is want of appearance. But I have the confidence—

Mabel. I perceive you have—

Dym. To believe that manners, intellect—in short everything that is not perceptible at first sight [*She looks at him again*—may atone for personal appearance. I have spent the greater part of the night inditing an epistle which I hope to place in your hands. May I entreat the favor of an early perusal, and hope that in your next Answers to Correspondents I shall find a reply to your ardent and devoted admirer—S. D. [*Produces a very minute billet doux.*]

Mabel. [*Not taking it, and looking saucily at him.*] S. D?

Dym. S. D.

Mabel. Well, then—"S. D. Declined—with thanks!" [*Curtseys and goes up.*]

Dym. Declined—with thanks! [*Putting it in his pocket and buttoning up his coat.*] Ah! I presume Crowded out for Want of Space.

Thors. [*L., moodily, and coming down.*] Well!

Dym. Well! I see it all. She has no heart.

Thors. Yes she has.

Dym. No, she has not. She may have a patent lever with half a dozen attachments ticking in her bosom, but she has no heart. If she had, my address would have touched her.

Thors. [*Crosses to R.*] You're a fool. You don't want a wife. You want a mother!

Dym. [*Angrily.*] I do, do I?

Thors. Yes, and so do I; we're both idiots. Here we've been clasping hands and swearing to win or die, and all that,

when one of us would be knocked out if the other succeeded. I just begin to see the idiocy of the whole thing. You see here's the difference between a boat race and a love race. All the fellows in the same boat win, but only one of the fellows in love comes out ahead. The rest are swamped.

Dym. [L.] Well, if you got her, I would have been satisfied.

Thors. Well, if you had got her, I wouldn't. I candidly confess it.

Dym. Look here, Thorsby, you haven't got the stuff for Damon and Pythias, you haven't.

Thors. [*Grasping his hand.*] No, I haven't. You are the squarer fellow of the two, Sammy. I despise myself. I'm going back to school again. But I say, old fellow, if you and I ever fall in love with the same girl again—

Dym. Well?

Thors. I'll step out and leave you to walk over. [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

Dym. Something's wrong somewhere! All the fellows who borrow my money tell me that, with my million, I can marry any girl I please. Either she don't know I'm worth a million, or the fellows lie, or she's different from the rest of the girls. No, they all snub me. Im not intended for a husband. Thorsby's right. I don't want a wife—I want a mother. I must hunt up a good, amiable old soul and pop the novel question. For the situation of son, red hair can't be objectionable. [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

LUCILLE, C. R., and MABEL, C. L., *pass in at back as the MUSIC re-commences.*

Lucille. There's music, dear. A waltz. [*Going.*]

Mabel. [R.] I'm engaged. I'll wait for my partner here.

A gentleman enters, offers his arm to LUC., and she goes off as MABEL strolls down to seat, C., and RAYMOND enters, L. 1 E.

Raymond. [*Softly, and looking about him.*] All alone! What a paradise for a flirtation.

Mabel. [*Plucking a flower idly and not looking up.*] If anything so insincere as a flirtation entered here it would be paradise lost.

Ray. Yes, an opportunity lost. It was a cant phrase of society I uttered.

Mabel. [*Low tone.*] I am weary of its phrases. I wish I could discover if it have a heart. [*Crosses to L.*]

Ray. [*Aside.*] If I stay, I'll have to speak out, and it's too soon for that.

Mabel. How well we play our parts in the comedy of fashionable life. We laugh and chat together, and pretend we are the dearest friends, while—

Ray. While?

Mabel. While we are merely neighbors! and neither of us cares a straw for the other.

Ray. [R., in tender tone.] Do you think so. If I might speak, I could vouch that there is at least one whose whole heart, whose every hope is centered in—his neighbor. [After a pause, his hand steals down to hers; he takes it; she looks at it fondly.] Am I very presumptuous? Not a word! [His other hand steals 'round her waist.] Mabel, is there not one other who cares for the happiness of him that addresses her. Say only that you have seen my love, that you do not despise it, that you sometimes think of me, and that my affection is not unworthy of you.

Mabel. [Turning to him affectionately.] Oh, Raymond, can you doubt it?

Ray. [Draws her to him and kisses her cheek; an involuntary tremor shoots through her frame.] My darling.

Mabel. Hush, Raymond! [rising] they will see us.

Ray. No, no, there is no one near. Mabel, let me once hear you say that you return my love.

Mabel. Yes. Yes. [Struggling to be free.] Let me go. Dear Raymond, there is some one coming. [She frees herself, and hurries off, L. 1 E.]

DOCTOR enters, R. 1 E.

Ray. Perhaps 'tis well. Another moment and—

Doctor. [Assuming a gay air.] Ah! Mr. Lessing, I have just left a very lovely woman, who is anxiously inquiring for you.

Ray. [L.] Indeed.

Doc. The beautiful widow! What a hero you must be to conquer our haughty hostess.

Ray. You are extremely flattering.

Doc. My dear fellow, I never dose people with flattery. It is a species of sugar pill which anyone can detect. No. When I contemplated the idea of Lucille Renfrew falling in love with you, my mind was lost in visions of your extreme good fortune in a double sense. You see you acquire at once everything that old Renfrew left behind him—his money, and his lovely widow. What a woman—she managed to get the whole estate.

Ray. [Interested. Hitherto listless.] The whole estate—and his daughter?

Doc. Absolutely dependent on the step-mother.

Ray. Why, she is said to be an heiress in her own right.

Doc. In her own right she is possessed of a wealth of golden hair, sapphire eyes, ruby lips, brow of pearl, coral cheeks, and, in short, a golconda of beauty—but as for dimes and dollars!

Ray. Nobody seems to know of this.

Doc. Ask Mrs. Renfrew.

Ray. [L., *half aside.*] Impossible!

Doc. Then believe me; or better still—go to the Surrogate's office and look at his will. No, no, my dear fellow, you will have no one to divide with when the widow divides with you. It's very kind of all you young fellows to pay Mabel so much attention; but, of course, its all got under a sort of false pretence, and she couldn't complain if, when the little imposture is discovered—

Ray. Doctor—you—you embarrass me—you agitate me. I mean you grieve me if you suppose I—

Doc. You—Lord bless you, nobody thinks of you. Your attentions to Lucille have been too marked. The whole world talks of that. As for Mabel, no one could, would or should accuse you of acting any other part than that of an agreeable acquaintance. You have no money—she has no money. People never put that and that together. It's preposterous.

Ray. [*Edging off.*] Pray excuse me. I see—

Doc. You see the fair widow beckoning to you. So do I. Go to her, my dear fellow—go and be— [RAY *nods nervously and exits*, C. R.] —punished as you deserve, for a confounded, false butterfly son of a grub.

MARY STANDISH *enters, dressed to go.*

Mary. Have you seen Arthur, Doctor Gossitt? He told me to prepare for our departure. He had only a little note to write explaining his sudden resolution. We are going home to-morrow. To Deerfield. Something has happened. You are his friend. Do you know what it is?

Doc. [L., *looking off and seeing MABEL enter*, L. 1 E., *with an open note.*] Yes, it's coming this way. [Up a little with *Mary.*]

Mabel. [L., *reading.*] "I love you with all the devotion and ardor of which man is capable. I beseech you, give me such an answer as my sincerity deserves. I cannot return to this house nor see you again unless as your accepted suitor. Arthur Standish."

Doc. [*Aside.*] Arthur's letter! It is easy to see what the answer will be.

Mabel. Doctor. Look at this. [*Tenders letter.*]

Doc. I know what it is.

Mabel. Then you know what folly it is—what madness it is.—What right has he to address me in this way?

Doc. A man's true love always gives the right to declare it and to demand an answer.

Mabel. [*Crosses to R. About to tear letter—with flashing eye.*] An answer—this is my—reply.

Doc. [*Restraining her.*] Wait! wait until to-morrow.

Mabel. Not an instant.

Doc. I implore you. Something may happen to prevent your treating his honest confession with contempt.

Mabel. What can happen? What miracle do you expect?

Doc. One of those miracles that happen every hour without the stars falling or the earth trembling. Look!

He draws her behind a vase of flowers at the R. as RAY and LUC. enter, C. L., arm in arm, and pass down L.

Lucille. Take care, Raymond, there may be some one here.

Raymond. [*L.*] You see the place is empty.

Luc. But Mabel.

Ray. She has just received a letter, and passed out into the library, I think, to read it.

Luc. She will return.

Ray. And if she does—why should I draw back? I must speak. I must tell you how you have mistaken me. I can't bear your continued suggestions that I am in love with her, that I—

Mabel. Ah! [*About to faint.*]

Doe. Help! Mabel!

THORS. darts in from R., catches her. DYM. follows. STANDISH enters, L. 1 E., with MARY at C.

Ray. Mabel!

Luc. [*L., angrily.*] Mabel, what are you doing here?

Dym. [*R., beside Thors.*] I'll give you a thousand dollars if you'll let me take your place.

Mabel. [*By a supreme effort regains her composure and steps back, confronting RAY. and LUC.*] I came to find you. I had something to say. [*STAN. is about to go.*] Stay, Mr. Standish. This letter of yours—an offer of marriage!

Standish. [*At her haughty tone, feels that all is over.*] I understand—and I leave Grassmere to-night and forever.

Mabel. Not so. Please stay. [*Extending her hand to him as she looks at LUC. and RAY.*] I accept your offer. There is my hand.

Stan. Mabel! [*Throwing himself on his knee and seizing her hand. DYM. faints in THORS. arms. The DOC. goes to MARY, who turns aside to suppress her tears.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Old Deerfield. Interior of a large and pleasant sitting-room in a New England home. Windows at back open on a piazza which is supposed to descend by a flight of steps into a garden. Fireplace at L., with old-fashioned and bright log fire. Old-fashioned stiff-backed chairs with one or more modern sofas and arm-chairs, covered with neat chintz. Table near the R., with old-fashioned candle-sticks and candles lighted. Sofa above the fire with comfortable pillows. Night. Moonlight outside. RAITCH is at the fire-place polishing the brasses. AUNT DOROTHY seated C., watching Raitch.*
MUSIC.

Dorothy. [*A hearty, prim, tidy, old-fashioned dame.*] There! I'm sure they look as well and feel as soft as if they were covered with satin. I hope she may think so too.

Raitch. [*On her knees at fire, L., a harum-scarum "help."*] And ain't this here a fire to make a regular lady open her eyes! None of your city fires pinched up in a grate like a prisoner behind the bars. A regular free and independent fire I calls it.

Dor. [*Back of sofa.*] A capital fire, Rachel, and when Captain Standish's wife warms her pretty feet, she'll surely ask who made it!

Rai. [*Squatting.*] Will she so, Miss Dorry! And I can put on my best calico to come in when she sends for me, can't I? I'm to wait on her my own self, ain't I?

Dor. Of course.

Rai. It'll be like Sunday all the week through with my new frock on. [*Rocking herself on the rug, her hands round her knees.*] I say, Miss Dorry.

Dor. [*Seated c.*] Well, Rachel?

Rai. She'll be mighty happy here! It's nuttin' time and cider time, and quiltin' parties in a'most every house.

Dor. Old Deerfield never looked so beautiful. If she loves the country she will enjoy this.

Rai. Lor', Miss Dority, what do city gals know about country! But I can show her everything. How to milk the cows, churn butter and make cheese.

Dor. Yes, if she would like to learn such things.

Rai. And I can show her where the turkeys eggs is! I know. And then the hens. You know how our hens do hide! I found out two new nests way under the barn! Crept in a'most flat. I'll take her there. I wonder if she's afraid of weasels.

Dor. I'm afraid Arthur's wife wouldn't like to creep under the barn, a'most flat, so it doesn't matter.

Rai. Lor', she can put on one of her common frocks! I dessay she's got lots of frocks made to tumble around in.

Dor. Don't be too sure of that.

Rai. Well, all the city gals has trussos, six dozen o' these and six dozen o' those. And there'll be half a dozen or so of common clothes to muss in. I'll bet my hair.

Dor. 'Sh! Rachel. How often have I told you—

Rai. Yes, Miss Dorry! I forgot! I wasn't to bet anything, for nothing. I'm growing too big, ain't I?

Dor. Yes, and you're growing too big to sit on the floor, too. Come, jump up—there's a good girl.

MATTHEW STANDISH *enters up-stairs, L. C., with a telegram, lays his hat on the rack near door.*

Back from the post-office so soon, brother? And a letter?

Matthew. Telegram. Boyce brought it over. They will be here at once. [*Stage R.*]

Rai. [*Crosses to him, jumping up and clapping her hands.*] O—oh! They're coming. I'll run and put on my— [*MAT. looks at her.*] Miss Dority said I could!

Dor. Yes, run away with you. [*RAI. runs up with Mat.'s coat, tripping over it as she goes, and finally hangs it on rack at C. passage, L. C.*]

Rai. I'm so happy I can't walk.

Dor. [*At fire, L.*] Be quick or they'll be here.

Rai. Oh, I'll be quick, you bet!

Dor. Rachel!

Rai. I forgot; but I didn't bet, Miss Dority, I said, "you bet!" [*Exits up steps, L.*]

Dor. [*As MAT. sits c. in a reflective mood.*] So Arthur is bringing home his wife at last. [*She stands by his chair.*]

Mat. [*Seated c.*] At last! [*Looks at her.*] Have you seen Mary this evening? [*DOR. nods.*] It's coming close to her now. How does she bear it?

Dor. Just as she has borne it all along. As if she were going to welcome a sister.

Mat. I haven't been able to look at that girl's face for months past. I see her heart—that is enough. [*Sighs.*] To think that you and I planned a match between her and Arthur ever since they were children.

Dor. There's no harm done, brother, we never told either of them our plans.

Mat. That's the harm we have done, sister. If I had spoken to Arthur long ago—

Dor. We thought it over long ago, and made up our minds that old folks' wishes warped young folks' wills. No—no—we did better—we waited—

Mat. And while we waited, Mary began to love him.

Dor. Then it was not for us to speak. If he could not see and understand—

Mat. [*Striking arm of his chair with his hand.*] See and understand. Among a lot of flippery women, bedizined in jewels and silks, rustling and dancing in the candle-light like motes in a sunbeam! I tell you I lost him when I let him go into the navy—when I let him enter what he calls fashionable houses—when I—

Dor. [*L.*] When you let him go to college and make friends there—

Mat. No. I would put every laborer on my farm at college if I could. Learning makes a man. It's the company, not the books, that makes the fool!

Dor. You never spoke that way of Arthur before, and now he's coming home. You used to be eager and happy when he came home.

Mat. There's more than Arthur coming home this time.

Dor. His wife, Matthew!

Mat. A pretty wife—I'm afraid.

Dor. Very pretty—so Mary says.

Mat. What will you say if she turns up her fashionable nose at us?

Dor. Surely you don't expect that!

Mat. I have my fears. What is she? One of that set who live half their lives abroad—in Paris, I believe—because America is not good enough for them. If they turn up their noses at America, what can *we* expect.

Dor. I am sure Arthur's letters to us—

Mat. I have particularly observed that Arthur's letters never said a word about his lady wife's temper, or her heart, or her sincerity. No. He took delight in filling our ears with her beauty—"regal"—"queenly"—"dazzling." Those were the words. And her family, "the oldest"—"the most aristocratic." And her manners, "the centre of a brilliant circle"—and her wit, and her crowds of adorers. Believe me, sister, a son would not display such a mass of tawdry stuff before his father's eyes, if he had anything more solid to show.

Dor. He supposed, of course, we would take all the rest for granted.

Mat. Depend upon it, we will have to take all the rest for granted, for we'll see none of it.

Dor. But why talk this way now. What is done can't be helped.

Mat. Aye, what *is* done can't be helped. But what is not yet done must be prevented. [*Rises, crosses, puts letter on table, returns to c.*]

Dor. I don't understand.

Mat. If this pretty and witty and queen-like young lady has made a slave of Arthur, we must take care that she makes none of us.

Dor. You are not going to make war upon a poor little girl.

Mat. Do I look as if I would! No. I am going to defend myself when a poor little girl makes war upon us.

Dor. [*L.*] Well, for the life of me—

Mat. Do you expect this fashionable female tyrant to submit without a struggle? Here are no crowds of adorers, no circle of wits, no throng of flatterers. Only poor you and poor me to be dazzled. We are not to be subdued. In this house for five and forty years a single will has been law.

Dor. [*Kindly to him.*] A good will and a gentle law, brother. She will not dispute what everybody loves.

Mat. [*Crosses L.*] Let us hope so. But nothing is to be changed because she comes, you understand. The hours of rising and retiring, the hours of meals, and the family devotions, the order which should reign in every household, are for *her* as well as for us all.

Dor. Merey!—and is that all you mean?

Mat. That is all.

Dor. What a fright for nothing. Arthur's wife will never dream of doing what is not agreeable to her husband's father.

Mat. Don't be too sure—until we see.

Dor. Besides, Arthur would never permit his wife to disobey you.

Mat. Arthur is in love according to the new order of things, sister. The women rule the world in which she was bred, and the men stand in awe of them. Once upon a time the man was head of his house. Now he's a fetcher and carrier for the dainty, selfish tyrant he calls wife.

Dor. But Arthur!

Mat. Mark my words—Arthur never won Miss Mabel Renfrew until she was sure of his conversion to the new social creed. But as for me, I'm a Pagan to these society goddesses. The women whom I respect are those who—

Dor. Hush! Here is Mary.

Mat. Mary! She rounds off the sentence. The women I respect are such as Mary. If I had had my will Mary would have been—[*Crosses R.*]

Dor. Oh, for goodness sake, brother, spare her!

MARY entering blithely from steps, crosses to C.

Mary. I have been looking up the road and away over the hill, but there's no carriage in sight yet. And now it's quite dark and growing colder. Why, Aunt Dorothy, how charming you look. That is the wonderful cap, is it? It's the prettiest you ever had. Such a dear, good-natured mother, to welcome a bride to her home. And Mabel is like me! She just remembers her mother—and that's all. I'm sure she will love you as one.

Dor. [*L. Clasp ing her to her bosom.*] Oh, Mary! how I wish! —[*Wipes away tears.*]

Mary. I will tell you what I wish, aunt. That the good folks would come as quickly as possible. I wish they had come before dark. It's a long drive, and she'll be so tired. [*Goes to table R. and arranges flowers.*]

Dor. [*L. To Mat.*] If she has no repinings, why should you?

Mat. [*C.*] Come here, Mary! I have been talking to your aunt.

Dor. Oh, brother! [*Apprehensively.*]

Mat. [*C., smiling.*] Be quiet! She is terrified at my cruelty—this poor, browbeaten aunt of yours.

Mary. [*R., advancing.*] And to whom are you cruel, Uncle Matthew?

Mat. To vanity and frivolity, my dear. I scent their approach from afar, and I have merely said that there is to be no allowance made here for affectation.

Mary. Surely, uncle, you are not going to prejudge Cousin Arthur's wife.

Mat. [*Coolly.*] No.

Mary. Nor to seek for grounds of dislike to her.

Mat. [*Mildly.*] No.

Mary. [*Her hand on his shoulder.*] And above all, Uncle, dear Uncle! You will not close your heart against the woman your son brings to your threshold?

Mat. [*Moved.*] No—a thousand times no. My heart is open to receive her—if she be worthy.

Mary. Your heart must be open to receive her if she were unworthy, uncle. You must shut your eyes and close your ears, and see and hear only your son, who says to you—"Father, this is my wife!" But she is not unworthy. Nay, she is good, or how could she have chosen Arthur from among so many.

Dor. [*L.*] That is true, brother, she—

Mat. Will you be quiet?

Mary. She was worshipped almost, in her sphere, but you see she was sensible and true-hearted, and turned away from them all. She is an angel, uncle.

Mat. [*Kissing her.*] You are an angel.

Mary. No, you have all been too kind to me. But I saw my own defects. I could never inspire the love she does. There are some girls, uncle, who fill the full measure of man's happiness by their love—and there are other girls—

Mat. [*R.*] Who fill the whole world with love—and you are one of them. Tell me how to welcome Arthur's wife, and I'll do it your way.

Mary. [*Stepping back a pace.*] Eyes shut.

Mat. [*Shutting his eyes.*] Yes.

Mary. Arms open.

Mat. [*Arms open.*] Yes.

Mary. And clasp her to your heart.

Mat. Yes. [*Clasps Mary, who struggles.*]

Mary. Oh!

Mat. [*R.*] [*Sudden revulsion.*] I forgot. You are not Arthur's wife. [*MARY silently turns away and puts handkerchief quickly to her eyes.*]

Dor. [*Reproachfully.*] Brother! [*Tenderly to Mary.*] My own love.

Mary. [*Conquering her emotion and smiling.*] Uncle squeezed me so hard. [*Goes to mantel.*]

MUSIC. *Carriage wheels heard. Voices of workmen outside:*
"Hurrah! Hurrah!" "Welcome! Welcome Home!"
 RAITCH *bounces in in a new frock, partially unbuttoned*
behind. Hair wild, one shoe off.

Raitch. Hurrah! They're a'coming. The men are all in the road hurrying, and I didn't have time to hook my frock all up—and I forgot they were a'coming and not a'going, and I heaved my shoe at 'em, and it hit Dandy in the off eye, and he reared up on his hind legs. But they're a'coming! Hurrah! Hurrah! [*Gets R.*]

Dor. [*At door, looking off.*] Poor thing, she looks blue with cold. There she sits in the carriage, all muffled up. And here's—Arthur! Oh, my dear—dear Arthur!

STAN. *hurriedly bounding up the steps.*

Standish. Ah! Aunt Dorothy! [*Hurriedly kissing her.*] Father! [*Shakes his hand.*] Is there a fire in here? Yes, that's right. I couldn't hand Mabel out of the carriage till I knew just where to take her. She's half frozen; the road was wretched.

[*DOR. runs down and exits. RAITCH after her down stairs.*]

Mat. [*Kindly.*] Have you found the journey very tedious, my son? [*Crossing and going towards door.*]

Stan. Yes, indeed! Oh, Mary! how are you? [*To Mat.*] We were jolted over the ground fearfully—my wife is nearly shaken to pieces. This place is altogether too much out of the way. [*Runs down the steps at back. MARY wheels sofa to fire.*]

Mary. She will soon be comfortable here. [*Goes to back of sofa and pushes it forward a little.*]

Stan. [*Outside.*] Come, Mabel dearest, we are really here at last. [*STAN. re-enters supporting Mabel, who is enveloped in elegant wraps.*]

MABEL *entering impatiently and withdrawing from his aid—passing Mat. at door without recognition.*

Mabel. Thank goodness. Is this the place?

Stan. [*Behind.*] Mabel! This is my father!

Mabel. [*Turns and looks at Mat. in surprise.*] I beg your pardon. I did not see you. I was only thinking of the fire. [*Gives him her hand.*]

Mat. I am glad to welcome—

Stan. [*Interrupting and taking her hand.*] The fire! Yes, my poor darling. You must be nearly frozen. This way, Mabel. [*Installs her at fire.*]

DOR. *enters with more wraps and RAI. follows with bundles, etc.*

Dorothy. [*To Mabel.*] I'll take these to your room at once, dear. [*Exits, R. U. D.*]

Raitch. Shall I take these, too, mum?

Mabel. [*Not heeding her.*] I should like to go to my room. Is there a fire there?

Rai. Better stay here, mum. The chimbley smokes in there for a good while arter the fire's lit. This is the comfortablest.

Mabel. [*Resigned.*] Then I'll stay here. Where is Sylvie?

Rai. Sylvie! Is it the little dog, mum? He's a barkin' like all possessed, out on the box.

Stan. No, no—it's my wife's maid.

Rai. If you please, mum, I'm to be your maid. Miss Dority said so, and I want to be. [*Commencing to blubber.*]

Mabel. Oh, dear, dear!

Rai. Leave the room instantly girl.

Rai. Yes, sir. [*Drops bundles and begins to wipe her eyes.* MARY runs to pick bundles up.]

AUNT DOR. *enters, R. U. D. SYLVIE enters C., up stairs, and both begin to pick up things.*

Sylvie. [*Loftily.*] I'll attend to it, please.

Rai. Please, may I do something. I'll go for the little dog.

Syl. [*Shocked.*] You? Don't attempt to touch Prince.

Rai. Does he bite?

Mabel. Sylvie, take my things to the room directly. [*SYLVIE sweeps off haughtily and goes to the door DOR. points out to her, R. U. D. DOR. then leads Rai. off L., by the arm.*]

Rai. I ain't done nothing, I ain't.

Stan. [*Still by Mabel's side.*] Oh, Aunt Dorothy, for goodness sake, send that girl away. My wife's nerves are— [*Rai. is ejected by DOR.*]

Mabel. There, never mind I dare say I shall soon be used to it.

Dorothy. [*Advancing, C. Kneels by her side.*] I hope she hasn't disturbed you. She has been almost wild all day. Perfectly useless. How do you feel, my darling, after your journey?

Mabel. [*Turning to her, kindly.*] Somewhat fatigued. Thank you.

Dor. Let me take off your things.

Stan. No, let me do it, aunt. I—

Mabel. Please wait till Sylvie comes; I won't trouble you.
 [*To Dor.*] Thanks, very much, for your kindness; it is so delightful to meet with such goodness after traveling so far, and all that.

Dor. You must have been frozen. [*Kneels by her.*] Is the fire warm?

Mabel. Very. It's all very nice. When will the smoke be out of my room, please?

Dor. That's Rachel's nonsense. I believe she wanted to keep you here to look at. [*Rises.*]

Mabel. Goodness me—is she a lunatic?

Stan. [*Back of sofa.*] Don't let her come near the house again, aunt, if you please.

Mabel. [*Rising.*] I'll go to my room at once.

[*MARY is going, R. C.*]

Stan. Somebody call Sylvie. Oh, Mary! Stop! Mabel, my darling, let me present you to my cousin Mary.

Mabel. [*Looks at her inquiringly.*] Your cousin—

Stan. [*C.*] Yes—little Mary. She's been like a sister to me—and she's the pet of the house.

Mabel. [*Kindly.*] How sorry I am not to have known you before.

Mary. [*Crosses to c.*] Oh, yes, you did— [*Checks herself.*]

Mabel. [*Politely.*] Did I? Where?

Mary. I was at Grassmere the very night—

Stan. [*To Mabel.*] The very night we were—

Mabel. [*Repressing an emotion.*] What a memory I have. But we'll begin our acquaintance now. There's no need to go back so far. [*Tenders her hand—MARY takes it.*] I've quite forgotten that evening.

Mary. [*R. c.*] Will you let me show you to your room—it's just off this.

Dor. [*Back of sofa.*] And you can have this for your sitting-room, if you like.

Mabel. [*L. c.*] Thank you, it will be delightful. [*To Mary.*] Is it this way?

Mary. [*At door.*] Through this passage.

Stan. [*As MABEL passes out.*] Dark as Erebus! Take care, my darling. [*Exits after Mabel. MARY follows.*]

Dor. I'll go and hurry the girls. [*She crosses towards L. Meets MAT., who has been promenading the piazza, with occasional glance inside. He looks at her. She is scared, and makes a slight detour round him, watching his eye. He smiles grimly and comes down.*]

Dor. [*As she goes off.*] I hope he won't wait to talk to me to-night.

STAN. *re-entering, looking off.*

Standish. Ah, father! [*Troubled and anxious.*]

Mat. [*Kindly.*] Well, Arthur!

Stan. [*Suppressing a sigh.*] Married at last, you see, father.

Mat. I see.

Stan. [*Watching his father and trying to appear at ease.*] You mustn't observe things too closely this evening. Mabel is somewhat annoyed at her journey—and she's far from well. I'm afraid she's not very strong.

Mat. [*Softly.*] Ah!

Stan. Yes. We have been all over Europe—to all the famous watering places. Spent two months at Baden and four in Italy. But nothing seemed to brighten her up.

Mat. It is a great pity. She was exceedingly lively and well—before you were married—was she not?

Stan. But these constitutional weaknesses sometimes develop themselves—

Mat. Very unexpectedly! [*Pause. STAN. looks round.*] Come, come; let us hope that your care and devotion will effect a cure. You seem quite devoted to her.

Stan. [*With a sigh.*] Yes. I owe her the devotion of my life.

Mat. Well. You are paying the debt bravely. I shall be glad to see that she appreciates it.

Stan. [*Quickly.*] I am satisfied.

Mat. I'm glad of that.

Stan. I said before, you must not observe her too closely this evening.

Mat. [*Kindly tone, and laying his hand on his son's shoulder.*] I shall observe no more than you wish me to observe, my son.

Stan. Oh, there's nothing to hide.

Mat. Exactly. And as there's nothing to conceal, we'll not trouble ourselves to look for it. [*Crosses to R.*]

Stan. How oddly you say that. Why, what were you thinking of?

Mat. Nothing.

Stan. [*Tremulously.*] I don't understand you, father. You seem strange. Did your father speak to you like this when you brought your wife home?

Mat. [*R.*] I did not observe his manner. I was so full of joy that I threw my arms around his neck, and never noticed his look or his word.

Stan. [*Hurt.*] Is this a reproach to me?

Mat. A reproach to you, my son? No! If you were happy enough to embrace anybody, I should be sure of being the one.

Stan. [*Stage L.*] You don't mean that you believe me unhappy? [*Laughs constrainedly.*] This is nonsense, you know. The fact is, my wife's state of health disturbs me. I can't help showing that. [*With a burst.*] Please don't look at me as if you thought me an object of commiseration. [*Getting back to c.*]

Mat. The fact is, Arthur, I am not to observe *you* too closely, neither, is it so? Well, well! come, take a walk with me. I'm going my usual rounds before evening prayer. You remember our old habits. [*Crosses up to R.*]

Stan. [*Heartily.*] Yes, and I'm glad to get back to them. [*Takes his father's hand.*]

Mat. [*Laying both hands on his son's shoulder.*] That's hearty! That's worth hearing from you, my son, come—if you and your wife love each other—

Stan. Certainly, father.—I assure you! But come, it's getting late. [*Goes to door, L. c., and down steps, taking his hat.*]

Mat. [*Solus.*] I thought as much. This is a marriage that brings no love, nay—kills what love there was. But there's more in it than the common blindness of the young. Well, well. Time will heal the wound or show its depth. [*Exeunt.*]

DOR. *peeps in from L., looks after Mat. Then comes down, and meets MARY, who enters from Mabel's room.*

Dorothy. They have gone for a walk. How is she?

Mary. [*R.*] Ah, aunty, how fair she is—but so pale. I looked at her once, and the tears came into my eyes.

Dor. Mary, how could you?

Mary. She stared at me. She must have thought me a little fool. [*Sinks into chair, c.*]

Dor. Control yourself better, Mary. [*MARY looks down.*] Don't think I've seen nothing, Mary. I know your heart. [*MARY sinks in chair and covers her face with her hands.*] Oh, dear, dear, don't Mary. What would become of us if this young lady were to think such feelings existed here—in her own house that is to be—

Mary. [*Starting.*] Do you think I would be so base?

Dor. No, but I know your secret.

Mary. [*Rises quickly and proudly.*] I have no secret! [*Softer and laying her hand on Dor.'s arm.*] Not now. [*Slowly.*] That

is all over. And if it had not been for her calm and searching look, I would not have remembered even. But there are some women whom you cannot deceive, and she is one of them. So I looked back into her eyes and she gave me her hand. We are friends.

Dor. Thank heaven for that.

Mary. [*Crosses to L.*] I will make her happy, if the help I get from There can give peace to other hearts as well as mine.

Dor. She is coming. [*After closing windows and doors, she exits, R.*]

MABEL enters in evening-dress, soft and flowing.

Mary. [*Running to Mabel.*] Will you take your seat by the fire?

Mabel. [*Sitting C.*] It is warm enough here.

Mary. [*Sitting on stool at her side.*] You look pale and tired, are you sure you are not ill? Perhaps you ought to have gone to bed at once.

Mabel. Thank you, I'm very well as I am. You must not be surprised to see me pale. I am not ill. It seems as if I could not be.

Mary. You say that as if it were a misfortune to enjoy good health.

Mabel. People's ideas differ as to what is misfortune. But don't let us speak of myself—it is the one topic that interests me less than anything in the world.

Mary. I see you are low-spirited. Are you fond of the country?

Mabel. I can't say that I am.

Mary. Oh! Isn't Cousin Arthur sorry for that?

Mabel. I don't know—I never asked him.

Mary. Because this is to be his home, you know.

Mabel. Indeed!

Mary. Of course, that is, of course—if you like it.

Mabel. I am satisfied with anything.

Mary. How strangely you say that!

Mabel. [*Peevishly—changing position.*] What do you do with yourselves here all day long. Is there no other house near?—no neighbors?

Mary. Down in the village, there are a great many nice people. This is the richest manufacturing district in the State.

Mabel. [*Leans back as if overcome.*] How pleasant.

Mary. Cousin Arthur will take care of the factory now, I suppose. Uncle always said he should give it to him when he married.

Mabel. [*Quickly.*] Does he intend to resign from his ship?

Mary. [*Surprised.*] Why haven't you and he talked over his future plans?

Mabel. No. [*Looks at her, then smiles.*] I'm afraid I begin to tire you. Do you sit up very late here?

Mary. Why it's not ten yet.

Mabel. No.

Mary. And we never go to bed 'till after prayers. We have our family devotions in the good old way. Uncle has made it a rule, as his father did before him. All the household gather in the parlor at ten o'clock.

Mabel. [*With a slight yawn.*] Indeed.

Mary. Didn't Cousin Arthur tell you all about his home?

Mabel. I don't recollect. I think Captain Standish never spoke much about it. [*Arises R.*]

Mary. [*Rises, aside.*] Captain Standish! How strange that she calls him by that name. And she takes no interest in anything. Perhaps she doesn't like me.

Mabel. [*Who has calmly watched her.*] Yes I do.

Mary. [*Confused.*] Yes you do—what?

Mabel. I take great interest in all you tell me—because *you* tell it.

Mary. [*Laughing.*] You are a witch! I was afraid that poor little I—who wish so much to love you and be loved by you—will not succeed in either.

Mabel. [*Leans over and kisses her forehead.*] You wish me to love you.

Mary. Oh, yes!

Mabel. And that will make up for—

Mary. [*Uneasily.*] For what?

Mabel. For what your woman's nature needs! Don't start. Listen to me. There is a void in our hearts which we try to fill with friendships—resignations—duty—and all the rest! It is impossible! They sink in it as in a gulf. It is still empty—cold—and dark. There is but one way—cover it—with indifference and contempt.

Mary. [*Terrified.*] Oh, Mabel, you are mistaken—you do not know me.

Mabel. [*Withdrawing her clasp.*] I know myself!

Mary. [*Alarmed.*] Are you speaking of yourself?

Mabel. [*Calmly.*] Hark! There are footsteps. They are coming back. I don't wish to keep you any longer. [*Crosses to fire.*]

Mary. [*Crossing R., aside.*] What a dreadful suspicion her words create in my mind. What is coming to this house in place of the happiness I dreamed of.

RAITCH, *putting her head in the door, L.*

Raitch. Pst! [*Both women turn.* RAITCH *makes signs to Mary.*] I say—

Mabel. What does she want?

Rai. [*Entering.*] I want to wait on you, mum—please.

Mabel. [*At fire.*] I don't need you, my good girl.

Rai. I see how it is. They've been telling you I wasn't fit for nothing. Now I know you'll find me handy, mum!

Mabel. Yes, yes—to-morrow.

Rai. Don't never pile anything on to to-morrow what you can square off to-day. That's the copy book and its prime sense too; you bet. I've got to make a beginnin'. I want to unhook you to-night—then you can see how handy I am.

Mary. [*R.*] Rachel you must not intrude.

Rai. Who ever heerd of a waitin' maid intruding. Other folks intrudes where a waitin' maid is by rights. [*Coaxingly.*] Ah, do take me on to-night, mum. I'm ambitious, I am—besides I was promised.

Mabel. But my good girl I have Sylvie, who is my maid.

Rai. Be you agoin' to keep *her* on, the whole time?

Mabel. Certainly.

Rai. [*Slapping her hands.*] Then its a do! that's what it is. It's a regular do. You was promised to me. Miss Dorritty promised me. I don't blame you, mum—nor you, Miss Mary! I blames them as promised.

Mary. Go to bed, Rachel.

Rai. I won't. [*Stamping.*]

Mary. You shall wait on me.

Rai. You ain't a bride. I was promised the bride. I made the fire for the bride to-day on my knees and I blew it till I thought I should a busted. Kin your gal make a fire like that. No sir-ee.

Mabel. Did you really make the fire?

Rai. Yes, mum, I did.

Mabel. It's a glorious fire. You shall come in every morning and make my fire.

Mary. [*Relieved.*] Thank goodness.

Rai. Shall I, mum? That'll do, mum. The fires is mine, is they? That's something. Don't let that city gal dare to touch my fires.

Mabel. Are you satisfied?

Rai. Yes, mum—because [*Cunningly*] fires must be kept up, and I'm to come right in to you any time to keep up the fires, ain't I? of course. Thankee, mum. Oh, I'll keep the fires red

hot, and if that city gal meddles, I'll make it red hot for her.
[*Exits L., upstairs.*]

Mabel. [*Rises, to Mary.*] She looked so distressed I had to use a little diplomacy.

Mary. [*Going to her.*] You have a kind heart, Mabel. Let me call you Mabel.

Mabel. Certainly. [*They kiss.*] Good-night.

Mary. Good-night. [*Going.*] If I could do good to her and him. [*Exits at R., 1 E.*]

Mabel. [*Getting to fire.*] It is easy to read her secret. Why did this man pass her by to come to me?

SYLVIE entering with books.

Sylvie. [R.] Will you sit here, madam?

Mabel. Yes. [*SYL. lays the books on table, R.*]

Syl. Shall I put out the lights beside you?

Mabel. Yes—all but one. Lock the doors.

Syl. [*At back.*] These don't fasten, madam.

Mabel. Never mind. Is that the door which leads to the parlor. [*Pointing where Mary went off, R. 1 E.*]

Syl. Yes, madam.

Mabel. Go. I'll call you when I want you. [*SYL. exits, R. 1 E.*] So this is my home. [*All is dark, only the solitary candle burning. Fire bright inside. Moonlight outside.*] Here my part is to be played to the end, with all these eyes upon me. His father—and the others. Jealousy and love watching every gesture and weighing every word. It was easy enough among strangers. But these people know what I should be. There has been an honest, homely, loving wife in this house. She is not forgotten. How long will it be before they detect the counterfeit? Why did I come back? There were means enough abroad, heaven knows, to end the wretched comedy and drop the curtain forever on my pitiful story. But I have been looking for what is impossible: some power to undo the fatal mistake I have made. Tied hand and foot! bound to slavery! linked with my own self-contempt! Oh, God, if I could die—could die! [*Drops her head on her arms on arm of chair, C.*]

MUSIC. *The window opens and RAGMONEY JIM with PADDER look in.*

Jim. No one here!

Padder. Gone to bed!

Jim. No; we saw the old 'un and the young 'un go up by the creek.

Pad. The women folks are all in the parlor.

Jim. And nobody to look arter the trunks. How careless. That's the way places gets robbed. Yonder's the way to her room—and nobody's there, neither.

Pad. I seed her jewels laying on the bureau as I looked through the window.

Jim. That's all we want. Step softly. Old boards creak.

Pad. I'm gossamer! [*They come forward. As they approach her chair, MABEL starts—looks up—they look at her—she starts up.*

Pause. *PAD. and JIM. look at each other; they take off their hats and adopt humble manner.]*

Jim. We didn't think any one was here, Miss, or we would a' knocked.

Mabel. Who are you?

Jim. A couple of miserable, starving creeters.

Mabel. [L.] What do you want?

Jim. Only a little assistance, Miss—charity—Miss—that's all.

Mabel. [*Looks around, sees window open.*] You entered by the window—you are robbers!

Jim. [*Fiercely.*] Robbers?

Mabel. [*Crosses to R. Suddenly running to parlor door.*] Help! Help!

Jim. Hush! hush! The devil!

Enter from up-stairs MAT. and STAN. From parlor, MARY, AUNT DOR. and SYL., R. 1 E.

Matthew. [L.] What is this?

Standish. [*To Pad. and Jim.*] Who are you? [*MARY and DOR. go to MABEL, who is angry and agitated.*]

Jim. Only poor, starving wretches, sir, begging for bread.

Mabel. [*Faintly.*] They are thieves!

Mat. [*Calmly.*] Did they try to rob you.

Mabel. They entered by the window.

Jim. [R. c., *advancing to Mat.*] All the windows is doors on the piazzzy, sir. Ask the lady if we didn't tell her we came to beg. Ask her if we didn't take off our hats and say we was starving.

Mat. [*To Mabel.*] You were a little nervous, my dear. There are many poor creatures like these wandering through the country. If we treated them like robbers, it would be punishing the distress we ought to relieve.

Jim. [*Whedding tone.*] That's it, sir! Oh, if there was only more like you, sir, the jails would soon be empty, they would.

Mabel. But these creatures' manner—their stealthy entrance—their— [*Crosses to L.*]

Mat. Pray be calm, my dear. Your nerves are a little more sensitive than ours. We are not quick to impute crime to rags. Arthur, speak to your wife, while I deal with these men.

Mabel. [*To Stan., low and haughtily.*] Does your father assume this tone because he wishes to display his indifference to my feelings.

Stan. [*L.*] Do not judge him harshly. He is a just man—a magistrate—and a merciful one.

Mat. [*To tramps.*] You are starving, you say?

Jim. Havn't tasted a morsel since yesterday, sir. Traveled all the way from Hamden on foot.

Dor. And good feet they are to travel on. What whoppers!

Mat. You shall be fed and lodged, to-night. No one leaves my house hungry or footsore. And if you need work—

Jim. Been out o' work for six months, sir.

Mat. The times are hard, I know. [*Calling.*] Rachel! I'll find you employment, to-morrow. Rachel! [*She enters, L. D.*] Rachel, take these men to the kitchen.

Raitch. All right, sir. [*At the sound of her voice, JIM and PAD. look at her—seem to recognize her.*]

Pad. [*Aside to Jim.*] What luck! Sally!

Jim. Fools' luck! Dropped right on to us.

Mat. Follow that girl.

Pad and Jim. [*Crossing up to Raitch.*] Thankee, sir.

Pad. I say, he'll find us work to-morrow.

Jim. Yes, if he finds us to-morrow.

Pad. Mizzle's the word. [*Turns to go.*]

Jim. The blessing of the hungry upon you, sir. [*Exits with Pad., looking searchingly at Rai. as they pass—she exits, L. D., after them.*]

Mat. It is late! Come, my children. Arthur, will you bring your wife. [*Goes into parlor, R. 1 E.*]

Mabel. Where?

Mary. [*To her, softly.*] For prayers. You remember I told you: every evening at ten; but they won't take long.

Mabel. [*Calmly.*] It is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether they take one hour or ten, for I am going to bed. Good-night.

Mary. Oh, do stay. Uncle will be so vexed.

Stan. [*L.*] Mabel, my dear.

Mabel. Am I not to do as I please in such a matter? What tyranny is this? Captain Standish, will you give me a candle, if I must go alone. [*He gives her one.*]

MAT. *re-enters*, R. 1 E.

Matthew. Where are you going, daughter?

Mabel. To my room. [*Turning away, up stage.*]

Mat. But we are about going to prayers.

Mabel. I know it, thank you; but I have no desire to be present. Good-night.

Mat. [*Gently, but firmly takes the candle-stick from her hand.*] My dear, I don't think the rules of this house are very hard rules—but such as they are, they must be complied with. Nothing but sickness can justify absence from family devotions. I cannot compel you to serve heaven from your heart, but while you are here, you must keep up the appearance of doing so. Stay with your husband, like a good girl. We shall not detain you long. [*Exits R., with DOR., MARY and RAL., R. 1 E.*]

Mabel. Did you understand what treatment I was to receive at the hands of your father, when you brought me here?

Stan. I did not. I will have an explanation with him, to-morrow.

Mabel. You need have no explanation. I leave this house in the morning.

Stan. [*Goes to parlor door quickly and closes it.*] I beg you not to make a rash resolution. I cannot devise a pretext that will satisfy those who will be hurt and astonished at our sudden departure.

Mabel. Our departure! I can go alone! Let the blame rest on me.

Stan. There is no blame which I shall not have to share. In *that* we are one indeed—if in all else, heaven help us, we must be divided. But our compact was that in all things we should keep up an appearance of concord before the world.

Mabel. I release you—indeed, it was always a matter of indifference to me. Stay with your people; they are not mine, and I shall not regard their opinion. [*Stage L.*]

Stan. I beseech you, Mabel—for the sake of what I have suffered already—do think better of this!

Mabel. You suffered? You?

Stan. I—I was guilty of no crime except that of blindly loving you. I have endured every slight which the coldness of an unloving heart could put upon me. In this instance it is not my affection, but my honor you treat with contempt. You will not dare do that.

Mabel. Not dare?

Stan. Not dare! Mabel—I thought better of you. [*Crosses to R.*]

Mabel. Who told you to think better of me? What in my conduct has led you to think that for your sake I will suffer the tyranny of this house. [*Up.*]

Stan. Nothing—heaven knows. From the day we were wed till now, you have tortured me by an indifference no man ever endured from a wife. But your duty—

Mabel. Duty! Is it not enough that I married you as I promised? That I kept my pledge given in a moment of wounded pride and girlish resentment, that I have lived with you—gone where you led me—worn the mask of deceit you shaped for me—without you forcing on me the duty of obeying the whims of this old man.

Stan. Have a care, Mabel. I am in no mood to trifle. Your actions to-night have told the miserable truth to him and to all who love me.

Mabel. To all who love you, indeed—and hate me. [*Up L.*]

Stan. It is false.

Mabel. It is true—for I deserve their hatred! Do you suppose I cannot understand that they wonder at a marriage to which no love was brought on my side?

Stan. I will not believe it.

Mabel. You will not? Recall the history of that night. But a moment before you knelt at my feet an accepted suitor, I had avoided you. Yes—shunned you! but a moment before I had laughed in your face—and yet in that one moment I mastered this aversion—this contempt—and said to you: I will be your wife. And you tell me that you believed I loved you!

Stan. I was mad enough then—to believe anything. [*Crosses to L.*]

Mabel. [*R.*] When we stood side by side to be married, you saw that I neither smiled—nor wept—nor spoke. Already I contemned—I hated myself! then you began to understand—

Stan. [*L.*] That you did not love me! But I asked for no reason—I spared you—

Mabel. You spared me! You led me to this living death, exulting in the miserable chance that satisfied your pride and your passion! You spared me! You! [*Turns from him up, round c.*]

Stan. What should I have done?

Mabel. The duty of a man who loves without selfishness: exacted the truth and saved me!

Stan. The truth! What truth?

Mabel. That truth which all the world saw—that I gave myself to you because I had lost all in the world I had to live for—love! [*L.*]

Stan. Love! whose love? Mabel, have you waited till now to tell me that you loved another?

Mabel. Have you waited till now to ask me? Yes—I did love another. I thought that he deceived me. My heart was broken. [*Turns away. He catches her hand.*]

Stan. Mabel, who was this man?

Mabel. I will not answer you.

Stan. His name! You have but to speak his name, and you are free.

Mabel. You know him.

Stan. His name!

Mabel. Raymond Lessing!

Stan. You loved him! You love him still! [*MABEL flings herself sobbing on the chair.*] And because you could not marry him, you married me!

Mabel. [*Stung and rising.*] Yes! If you will have the truth—that is the truth.

MAT. appears at the door, R.

Stan. [*Casting her from him.*] Miserable woman! You have no need to leave this house—I give you your freedom and your self-contempt. What we have been to each other, let heaven, in its mercy, keep an eternal secret. What we shall be henceforth, let the world know and mock at. Farewell, for ever! [*Rushes out, down stairs. MUSIC.*]

Mabel. Arthur! [*Makes a step, sees MAT., who advances after Stan., and draws herself up, leaning against back of sofa for support in her pride. MAT. bars her progress, thinking she intended to follow Stan.*]

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Same as last.*DR. GOSSITT *enters with* DYMPLÉ, *up-stairs*, L. C. MUSIC.

Doctor. Unannounced and unheralded so far—but, I hope not unseen.

Dymplé. [*Looks off L.*] Evidently not. For yonder stands a maiden of a particularly curious, not to say gimletty, eye, who watches our movements.

Doc. Call her.

Dym. [*Raises his finger and crooks it.*] She smiles and rolls down her sleeves preparatory to leaving her dishes and waiting on us.

Doc. What's become of Thorsby?

Dym. [*Looking off, C. R.*] He's at the gate, and apparently rooted to the spot.

Doc. Bashful as ever.

Dym. His eyes are fixed with a steadfast gaze on vacancy. By jove! No! I beg her pardon—on another young woman—over there by the maples.

Doc. Also possessed of a gimletty eye?

Dym. She looks up! Gimletty! The softest—largest—darkest—loveliest eye—I ever saw. No wonder he can't come in. Who can she be? I say—you don't want me here.

Doc. [*Catching his coat.*] Combustible and inflammatory youth, I forbid you to stir. We are going to see a pair of eyes as dark and soft and lovely as any in the world.

Dym. [*Still looking off.*] Who can she be?

Doc. [*Coming down.*] Who? Why, Mrs. Captain Standish! The lovely Mabel Renfrew. Have you forgotten your old flame so soon? Yours and Thorsby's?

Dym. He's making up to her.

Doc. [*Astonished.*] The deuce he is. She's married.

Dym. [*Coming down to Doc.*] Is she? What's her name?

Doc. Eh? What is Mabel Standish's name?

Dym. Oh! I beg your pardon. It's a mistake. I was thinking—

Doc. Where are your wits?

Dym. As usual—hunting in couples with Thorsby's—after a pretty face.

RAI. enters, L., wiping her arms with her apron.

Raitch. [C.] Please sir, who was yer wantin'?

Doc. Mrs. Standish, my good girl; is she at home?

Rai. Yes, sir.

Doc. Give her my card. [*Gives card.*]

Rai. Can't, she's gone out.

Doc. Then she's not at home?

Rai. Yes, she is! I guess I know. But her and the baby and old Miss Dorothy's out for a walk.

Doc. Exactly so. I should like to see her.

Rai. Kin you wait?

Doc. Certainly, with pleasure.

Rai. Well, then, she'll be along before much. They don't go fur. Old master won't allow that.

Doc. [*Aside.*] So, so. [*Stage R.*]

Rai. [*After looking at Dym—to Doc.*] Son? [*Jerks her head to indicate Dym.*]

Doc. Eh?

Rai. [*Same play.*] Son? [*Arms akimbo.*]

Doc. No, my child; he's not my son.

Rai. Nevvy?

Doc. Nor my nephew.

Rai. He don't look like you! What's he looking at? [*To Dym.*] I say, Mister, is it a woodchuck? Lots o' them here.

Dym. A woodchuck? No, a wood nymph.

Rai. Shall I fetch the gun? Old master is down on all them animiles. He'll thank you for poppin' it over.

Dym. Thorsby's talking to her.

Rai. [*At fire.*] Talking's no use. Them critters won't come down for soft words.

Dym. I hope not in this case. Look there! Would you go gunning for such a lovely specimen of the animal creation as that?

Rai. Why it's Miss Mary!

Dym. Miss Mary? Who? what! Miss—the Captain's cousin. What a fool I am. Excuse me, Doctor, just a moment. Thorsby's walking off with her. Hol-lo! I can't stand that. [*Runs out.*]

Doc. Here, I say. Stop! You combustible institution.

Rai. No use, Mister. He's off. I say, do all your city gents carry on like that? You're from the city, ain't you?

Doc. [*Sitting R.*] The expression city and country are merely relative terms, my child. Do you ask for information.

Rai. [*Reflectively.*] I ain't got no relatives there as I want information about. Be you a friend of Miss Mabel's?

Doc. She is such a general favorite that the question must on second thoughts seem to you wholly superfluous.

Rai. [*Suspiciously.*] I don't understand.

Doc. Then your comprehension does not equal your curiosity, my child.

Rai. [*Keenly.*] I begin to see it—I does.

Doc. Do you!

Rai. [*Drawing herself up with firmness.*] We don't want no books, Mister—nor maps—nor sewing machines—nor fly traps—nor patent churns—nor guns! we don't—

Doc. What does the girl mean.

Rai. We takes the *Weekly Tribune*, and that's enough for the whole family. We don't want the *Ledger*, nor the *Weekly*, and we don't subscribe to nothin'. You're wastin' your time.

Doc. Does she take me for a book peddler?

Rai. You're wastin' your time, I tell you. We ain't in want of horse liniment, nor hair-pins—

Doc. My good girl, I'm a doctor.

Rai. A doctor! wuss and wuss! If master catches you here he'll break your nasty bottles over your head—

Doc. But, my dear—

Rai. [*Sits on arm of chair.*] Are we out o' spirits o' harts-horne and Blood Purifier and Instant Relief and Sand's Sassy-parilly and Mrs. Winslow's snoozing syrup?—Yes, we are, and we mean to stay out of 'em. Take my advice and git.

Doc. Allow me!—

Rai. What, you won't go? You will wait and see old master! Very well! But if he calls the dog on ye, don't blame me. [*Aside.*] I guess I'm square with him now! curiosity, indeed. [*Exits L. door, 1 E.*]

Doc. Confound the minx! [*Calling after her.*] Do I look like a patent medicine peddler?

MATTHEW entering at R. door.

Matthew. I don't know, my dear sir. Those invaders of domestic peace assume all sorts of shapes.

Doc. [*L., confused.*] I beg your pardon. I was addressing that impertinent little baggage.

Mat. Rachel! Yes, she assumes the duty of receiving and dismissing all itinerant vendors!

Doc. Allow me to introduce myself—Doctor Gossitt, of New York.

Mat. I am Matthew Standish. Pray be seated.

Doc. Mabel's father-in-law! This is fortunate. [*Shakes hands with him.*]

Mat. [*Dryly.*] Perhaps! We don't discuss it.

Doc. [*They sit.*] I've heard of you very often, Mr. Standish—from your son.

Mat. [*L. c., quickly.*] Do you know where he is?

Doc. [*R. c.*] No. Don't you?

Mat. I do not.

Doc. He has not written to you?

Mat. Yes—once! soon after he went away—

Doc. A sad case, this, Mr. Standish!

Mat. It is only what might have been expected.

Doc. I can't dispute it. I had my apprehensions long ago.

Mat. You were acquainted with my son's wife, then, before her marriage?

Doc. Yes, and with your son. The blame is not altogether on one side. His excuse was his blind infatuation.

Mat. I believe she cannot pretend to any such apology.

Doc. Well, well. It's over. The inevitable has occurred. They have separated. Let us wait for time to re-unite them.

Mat. You are exceedingly hopeful, Doctor.

Doc. Good heavens, sir! they have a child. I hope everything from that. He cannot desert the mother of his child.

Mat. If you had heard her talk to the father of her child as I did—

Doc. Pish! [*Rises.*] A girl's temper and a girl's tongue. Two ungovernable things.

Mat. Very. [*Rises.*]

Doc. Let misfortune threaten her, and his love will revive.

Mat. Exactly. But what is there to revive her love? which, as an Irishman would say, never existed.

Doc. This is no jesting matter, Mr. Standish.

Mat. Excuse me—it is a very excellent jest. To deceive an honest man into the belief that she loved him. To marry him—from pique! and then drive him from her when his society becomes distasteful. A capital jest, sir, in the cultivated circles from which my son chose to take a wife.

Doc. [*Impatiently.*] My dear sir. I beg you won't fall into the vulgar error of believing that people of superior station hold common virtues in no esteem.

Mat. Oh, no. I only conform to the aristocratic view, which holds love, marriage and duty subordinate to pride.

Doc. You misjudge this young lady.

Mat. I do not—and I never did!

Doc. Yes, you do! Excuse my warmth. I knew her from a baby. I knew her father—a man who would not hurt the feelings of a beggar. I knew her mother—an angel on earth, and long since one in heaven.

Mat. Do not excuse yourself, Doctor. I recognize your right to take this young lady's part. You will never offend me by that, she is very well able to take her own—and she does not offend me by doing so, neither.

Doc. [R.] Then, why in the name of all that's irritating, is she treated as she is?

Mat. Treated as she is? What, in the name of all that's wonderful, is the treatment you speak of?

Doc. I have received a letter from her. Here it is. She asks me to come here—to see her. I have the good fortune to see you first, and I'm glad of the opportunity of asking you why she is compelled to call on her friends for assistance.

Mat. For assistance?

Doc. For aid—to escape from this place.

Mat. To escape from this place? Pardon me for echoing your words. This is not a prison.

Doc. But she wishes to leave it—to return to her own home and friends.

Mat. She is at liberty to do so.

Doc. She and her child?

Mat. That is a different matter.

Doc. What is a different matter?

Mat. [*Rising.*] Listen to me, Doctor. I am the father of her husband. She drove my son from this house—his home. When he left it—in the dead of night—without a word to me, his father—despair in his face and in his heart—he left me a duty to perform: to watch over his wife while she remained here.

Doc. Well?

Mat. And to watch over his child whether his wife remained here or not. I cannot surrender this child to any other care. My son lives—he is the guardian of his boy—he may dispose of him as he pleases—until he does so, I will keep him.

Enter MARY at door.

Mary. Come in. Let me introduce you to uncle. [*Comes forward, followed by DYM. and THORS., who are very distant to each other.*] Uncle, let me! Ah, Doctor, do you remember me?

Doc. With the greatest pleasure, Miss Standish.

Mary. Uncle—Mr. Dymple! Mr. Gyll!

Doc. Friends of mine who accompanied me. They are going to shoot in the neighborhood.

Mat. [*Keenly.*] And to fish? There is capital sport in the streams. Glad to see you both. [*Aside.*] The body-guard of the Doctor, I suppose. Knight-errants sworn to rescue the lady from that ogre, her father-in-law! [*To Mary.*] Where is Mrs. Standish?

Mary. I saw her return from her walk a moment ago. She went through the garden. And uncle—those tramps I spoke to you about last week—I saw them in the road again to-day. Watching the house too, I thought.

Mat. Go. I'll find out what they want. Doctor, if you will follow Mary [*crosses to R.*] she will show you where my daughter-in-law is to be seen.

Mary. [*Bringing Mat. down.*] Oh, uncle! Mabel is looking more and more unhappy every day.

Mat. [*Sarcastically.*] Her husband's absence is so protracted.

Mary. You are cruel.

Mat. I am.

Mary. [*C.*] Think how many weeks she has been ill and nearly dying.

Mat. [*To Doc.*] Here is another, Doctor, who does not offend me by taking the part of my son's wife. [*Crosses to boys.*] Will you excuse me for a few moments? I have to see my farmer. [*Boys bow. He exits, L. C., down stairs.*]

Doc. [*To Mary.*] I thank you. [*Takes her hand.*]

Mary. Make her happy, and I will thank you with all my heart. [*Doc. and MARY exit, R. U. D.*]

Dym. Now we're alone, perhaps you'll be good enough to explain your behavior to this young lady. I can't see any difference between the way you go on and regular spooning, I can't. I thought you said your heart was broken and the world was a desert.

Thors. [*C., horseback on chair.*] That's pretty good for you. You agreed with me that your hopes were blighted, and you were soured with the world.

Dym. Well!

Thors. Well! You've been doing your best for the past ten minutes to cut me out.

Dym. Cut you out! You admit it. And we swore to go hand in hand for the rest of our existence, cherishing one image and forswearing the rest of the sex.

Thors. [*Rises.*] I know I did. But this one's an old acquaintance.

Dym. [*Rise.*] Look here, Thorsby! I have such regard for you that I don't mean to let you become a perjured villain. I'll take charge of this young lady while we stay here.

Thors. Much obliged.

Dym. I'll keep you out of temptation. I'll remain constantly by her side.

Thors. Very well! Go on!

Dym. What do you mean by go on?

Thors. I'll be there.

Dym. You'll be where?

Thors. On the other side.

Dym. I'll inform her that you've sworn never to marry, and show you to be a perjured villain.

Thors. If you dare! Mind! Everyone for himself! She don't like red hair!

Dym. [*Disturbed.*] You don't mean to say—

Thors. [*Crosses to R., to back of chair. Waving him off.*] Every one for himself. She'll prefer a perjured villain to a red-headed one.]

Dym. Thorsby! [*Going to him.*]

RAG. JIM, at window.

Rag Jim. Pst!

Dym. Who are you, my effervescing friend?

Jim. [*Very hoarse.*] Governor about?

Dym. [*Same tone.*] Do you mean the old gentleman?

Jim. [*Nods.*] Yes, the tall old file.

Dym. Off there! [*Points L.*]

Jim. [*Enters.*] Good! Where's the young lady? Her as came in a while ago.

Thors. [*To Dym.*] What does he want with Mary?

Dym. [*Stiffly.*] Miss Standish, if you please. [*To Jim.*] What's your business?

Jim. [*Hands him old yellow envelope.*] Give her that. Mum's the word. You look like a downy cove, you do.

Dym. [*Pleased.*] I look like a downy cove!

Thors. He alludes to your head. [*DYM. annoyed.*] Everybody notices it.

Jim. Not a word! Only give her that! [*Exits, down stairs.*]

Thors. Give her that! Let's see it! [*After watching him off.*]

Dym. Perjured villain! What have you to do with it?

Thors. I've as much to do with it as you have.

Dym. I've always observed that when a man deliberately becomes a perjured villain, he seldom hesitates at minor indiscretions. Would you violate the seal of a confidential communication?

MARY enters, R. U. D.

Miss Mary [*with bow*], a letter just delivered.

Mary. [*C., takes it.*] What a dirty letter.

Dym. The messenger was fully as dirty as the letter.

Mary. [*Reads.*] "I've talked it over with my pal, and we agree"—why, what a curious letter: a lot of printed words seemingly cut from a newspaper, and pasted together. [*Looking on the envelope.*] No name! are you sure it is for me?

Dym. Oh, yes. The man described you, I'm certain.

Mary. [*Reads again.*] "I've talked it over with my pal, and we agree that the job ought to be done at once. If you're willing, there's no time like the present. Wait till night, and when the governor calls the servants to prayers leave your window open, and leave the rest to us!" What does it mean? No address! no signature!

Dym. [*L.*] Job! what's the job?

Mary. [*C., to Gyll.*] A messenger brought this?

Thors. [*R.*] Looked like a tramp.

Mary. A rough man! My mind misgives me. I must show it to uncle. [*Crosses to R.*]

Dym. Do.

Thors. I'll go with you.

Dym. So will I. [*Crawling on Thors., pushes him away.*]

Mary. What horrible plot does it disclose.

Dym. [*To Mary.*] Some scheme worthy of a perjured villain. [*Glances at Thors., stage L.*]

Thors. [*Same business.*] The base emanation of a red-headed intellect.

Mary. Please come with me, Mr. Gyll. Uncle will want to know more of this messenger. [*Exits with GYLL, who casts a triumphant glance at Dym., R. 1 E.*]

Dym. [*Solus.*] She deliberately selected Thorsby! He's got her! That ten minutes start of me did the business. I have tried to save him. But he won't be saved. What's left for me?

DOROTHY enters, L. C., up the stairs at back with the child ARTHUR.

Dorothy. No, my darling, mamma will want you now. You are too tired to run about any more. [*Sees Dym.*] I beg your pardon. [*Aside.*] One of Doctor Gossitt's young friends. [*To Dym.*] Mr. Gyll or Mr. Dymple?

Dym. [R.] Dymple, ma'am. Gyll has plunged into the vortex of passion! If you wish to see him inquire of the first lovely woman you meet!

Dor. Dear me! [*To Arthur.*] Stay by Auntie!

Dym. Hem! A lovely child, ma'am. Hem! yours?

Dor. Mine, sir? It is Mrs. Standish's son.

Dym. Come to Uncle Sammy! [*The child extends his hands.* DYM. sits and takes him on his knee.] As an old friend of the family, in fact, a rejected suitor of his mother, I think I may claim a sort of relationship.

Dor. Dear me! You seem to take it very coolly, sir.

Dym. [*Gives child his watch to play with.*] Madam—I beg pardon, are you Madam or Miss?

Dor. Miss—Miss Dorothy.

Dym. My prevailing characteristic, Miss Dorothy, is my shy and retiring disposition.

Dor. Indeed!

Dym. If I had been as bold as some people—who knows, this boy might have been mine.

Dor. Bless me!

Dym. But I took *no* for an answer, Miss Dorothy, and ever since have carried a crushed heart in my bosom.

Dor. It certainly does not show.

Dym. What I lacked was knowledge of the world. Miss Dorothy, I am an orphan. If I had had a mother I should probably never have taken “no” for an answer. I want a mother or a wife. Perhaps both. But I am convinced that I shall never get a wife until I have found a mother.

Dor. Really! You are a very odd creature, Mr. Dymple. I don't know whether to be amused by your frankness or not!

Dym. Thorsby Gyll, who, although a perjured villain, has no lack of judgment, advises me to get a mother. What do you think of it?

Dor. I think you certainly need somebody to advise, to look after you.

Dym. [*Quickly.*] Do you! somebody to advise, to guide, to direct, to protect me.

Dor. Exactly!

Dym. Some one into whose bosom I could confide my hopes

and disappointments. Miss Dorothy—you have a motherly air. [*She half rises.*] You have!—don't be startled!—I am about to make you an offer!—Be a mother to me. [*Rises, child goes to Dor.*]

Dor. [*Smiling.*] My dear Mr. Dymple, you are evidently out of your senses. [*Stupe L.*]

Dym. [*R.*] All for want of a mother! I want a good, kind, motherly, but firm and decided, creature to bring me to my senses.

Dor. Then I recommend you to get—

Dym. What? •

Dor. A mother-in-law! Marry the daughter of one of those ladies who are accustomed to govern their families. I think that, after a short experience, you will be tolerably well satisfied. [*Takes the child, crosses up R.*]

Dym. I never thought of that. It's capital advice. But in the meantime, if you would only think over what I've said.

Dor. I must respectfully decline to adopt you myself. I really have too much to do now. All the poultry is under my charge, and I really can't look after any strange chickens.

Dym. Ha, ha! very good! capital. [*Aside.*] I'm glad she didn't say calf. It appears to be as hard to get a mother as it is to get a wife. The entire range of female relationship seems to be denied me. [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

Dor. Come, darling, and see if we can't find some pretty books to look at, and wait till mamma is done talking to the naughty old doctor. [*Going, and pauses to look after Dym.*] I must really ask Mary if all the young gentlemen now-a-days are cracked. [*Exits into parlor.*]

RAG. JIM and PAD. look in cautiously and then enter.

Jim. [*R.*] It's too late—the wrong one's got it and gone.

Padder. Well, you are a precious soft one! Give the paper to the wrong 'un. Where's our fifty thousand dollars gone to? Up in a balloon, I suppose—for now they'll find us out and stow away the babby.

Jim. Oh, shut up. Trust me! I must see the gal.

Pad. Why, what can Sally do?

Jim. Never you mind. If that babby don't come into our hands by mild means—why—the game's not spoiled yet. Why the very heart-strings of that old file is bound round the child—and as for its mother! fifty thousand dollars would be only a drop in a bucket to them.

Pad. I could sit down and cry. All our little game knocked.
[Some one stumbles outside.]

Jim. You babbling fool. Hush! get out!

PAD darts out and JIM crouches up the stage as RAI. enters.

Raïch. [C.] Well, only to think. Miss Mary as never had no beau all her life—got two to oust. Oh, give me them sly gals for making a scoop when they gets a chance.

Jim. [At back.] Sis!

Rai. [Starts, then looks around hurriedly and anxiously.] Oh, go back—go back. You'll be ketched if you're seen.

Jim. [L.] You fool, I tell you I've made a mistake, given a message to one of them chaps and he's given it to—

Rai. To Miss Mary?

Jim. Yes.

Rai. Then it's all over. Oh, do go back! hide! I'll see what can be done.

Jim. Something must be done at once. Tell the lady.

Rai. I'll tell her, but do go away! go! *[In fright closes the window on him, he disappears.]* Oh, what shall I do?

MABEL and DOC. enter from her room, R. U. D.

Mabel. [As she enters.] I have thought of all that and I have made up my mind.

Rai. [Trying to catch her attention.] Miss Mabel.

Mabel. Another time, I'm busy now.

Rai. But Miss Mabel, I can't wait.

Mabel. Go to my room, then. I'll come presently.

Rai. [Goes up wringing her hand.] If I only knowed what to do. *[Exits, L. U. D.]*

Doc. [R.] To what have you made up your mind?

Mabel. To return to Grassmere, to my home, and to take my child with me.

Doc. Against the wish of your husband's father.

Mabel. Yes, in spite of it. In spite of the precautions he takes. Do you know that his servants follow me wherever I go with my own child, as if I meditated the theft of what did not belong to me.

Doc. How will you elude this watch?

Mabel. By a means as desperate as his tyranny is vile. Chance threw in my way two men who will hesitate at nothing. I have made use of these people for my purpose. I have arranged with them to—

Doc. To steal your child away.

Mabel. To assist his escape and mine from this prison house.
[*Crosses to R.*]

Doc. Mabel, my dear girl, pause before you commit this act. There must be some other way.

Mabel. There is no other way. I have tried to soften this father.

Doc. That was right.

Mabel. But I have committed the unpardonable sin in a father's eye. I have driven away his son.

Doc. [L.] Let me speak to him. Besides I have not come alone. I consulted with your step-mother. [*Mabel looks up.*] I had to consult some one. She has followed me down—she would not be denied. We will all have authority with this stern old man. He must yield.

LUCILLE, *up-stairs, appears at doorway, c.*

Lucille. May I come in?

Doc. [*Goes to her, c.*] Do, my dear madam.

Luc. [*Aside to Doctor.*] Raymond is outside.

Doc. Why couldn't he stay at home?

Luc. [L.] He wanted to come. He wouldn't lose sight of me for a whole day.

Doc. [*Sarcastically, crosses to L.*] Devoted fellow!

Luc. Isn't he! You see we are not married yet. [*Comes down as the Doc. goes up c.*] My dear Mabel! [*Takes both her hands.*] I could not stay away. I felt that you needed my sympathy. What is this extraordinary story? Have you married into a family of lunatics? First your husband runs away from you, and then his father keeps you under lock and key. What a pity, dear, they couldn't change dispositions. Why didn't the old man run away and the young one show such a desire for your society.

Mabel. Your sympathy is truly consoling, madam.

Luc. I knew it would be, my love. But come, tell me the whole of the dreadful thing from beginning to end. What a scandal!

Mabel. Scandal?

Luc. Why, my dear! your husband deserting you so shortly after your marriage.

Mabel. He had to join his vessel. His orders were imperative.

Luc. Indeed. Why didn't he resign?

Mabel. That was his own business. You will surely allow him to judge for himself in such a matter.

Luc. But to leave you here alone—away from New York.

Mabel. From your tone one would suppose he had gone without consulting me.

Luc. Oh! He did consult you then?

Mabel. Yes.

Luc. Then there has been no misunderstanding? No quarrel?

Mabel. Certainly not.

Luc. [*Leaning back.*] And he loves you just as much as he always did?

Mabel. [*Biting her lip and trying to master emotion.*] Yes.

Luc. [*Looks at her sharply.*] Well! no one will believe it.

Mabel. Do people always put the worst construction on the absence of a husband who happens to be an officer in the service of his country?

Luc. Don't talk nonsense, Mabel! Everybody knows that Captain Standish is rich enough to give up the service. He would have done so if he had been fond of his wife.

Mabel. [*Quickly.*] But I dissuaded him from sending in his resignation.

Luc. You wouldn't have done so if you had been fonder of your husband.

Mabel. [*Rises and crosses to L.*] Enough! My husband's affairs are no subject for your interference, or for the gossip of the world. [*Crosses to L.*]

Doc. Good! We'll have it all right yet. [*Strolls off, R. U. E.*]

Luc. Well, there is one matter in which you have asked outside interference, my dear. You wish to leave this place, with your child! and this father-in-law of yours objects.

Mabel. [*Coolly.*] A mere difference of opinion as to what is best for little Arthur's health.

Luc. [*Keenly.*] But you wrote a letter to the Doctor!

Mabel. [*Smiling triumphantly.*] Certainly, to ask his advice on the subject.

Luc. [*R.*] Ah! You are as clever as ever, my dear. And pray what does the Doctor advise.

Mabel. That I should remain.

Luc. [*Rises.*] Well, I'm glad of that. All things considered, you are better here among the set of people you have married into. Honest people, I dare say; but it was a deadful descent, Mabel.

Mabel. [*Turning passionately.*] And who drove me to it?

Luc. [*Scornfully.*] Who, indeed!

Mabel. [*L.*] You! You who schemed to get from me the man whom I loved.

Luc. [*Flushing.*] I schemed!

Mabel. There are no secrets between us, although till now never by word or sign have we referred to this subject. You schemed, you planned to ensnare him.

RAYMOND appears at back and listens.

Luc. You are mad, I believe. I will not stay here to be insulted. [*Crosses up L.*]

Mabel. [*Stage R.*] Yes, perhaps I am growing to madness. And that will be my excuse for any want of politeness, when I tell you that—

Luc. [*Trembling with anger.*] You wish me to go.

Mabel. At once!

Luc. Thank you, my dear! I forgive you. You may think better of this some day, and want my sympathy. Send for me when you do. [*Exits down steps.*]

RAYMOND comes forward.

Mabel. Raymond! [*Breathlessly, as she retreats a step.*]

Raymond. [*L., in tone of deep sympathy.*] Forgive me, Mabel. I came here with her because there was no other way to see you in this home. But I came on my own mission, not hers, to offer you the protection and help that is due even from a stranger to a woman who needs it.

Mabel. You—have come to seek me?

Ray. I know that you hate me, that you despise me. But you have no cause—on my life, you have no cause.

Mabel. Not after what I heard and saw!

Ray. The night that I clasped you in my arms, that I wrung from you a confession of love! [*She makes a quick gesture for him to be silent, and suddenly closes her ears with her hands, then buries her face in them.*] Yes, what you heard and saw that night would have stamped me as the veriest traitor breathing—but for one thing. It was that same night you gave your hand to Arthur Standish.

Mabel. [*Proudly.*] Well, sir.

Ray. But I do not blame you.

Mabel. [*Crosses to R. chair.*] Indeed! [*Rises, bitterly.*] Perhaps, too, you have forgiven me.

Ray. [*Warmly.*] Yes—for all the misery you caused me by taking that step before listening to my explanation. But now that I see you again—

Mabel. [*Starts up.*] You will hear me say that the past is forgotten. There is no need to revert to it. [*Goes to chair, R.*]

Ray. But the past has left its sting!

Mabel. What sting? Remorse? Pray cease to feel any, since you have done no harm.

Ray. You cannot deceive me, Mabel! You know that you are not happy. You cannot conceal the truth from me, for I, too—

Mabel. [*Clasping her hands on her knee.*] I have no wish to conceal the truth. God help me, it is stamped in my face and burned into my heart.

Ray. And that I am the cause—

Mabel. [*Same.*] No. No. The fault is mine!

Ray. [*Eagerly.*] But from the consequences of this fault, I will rescue you at the peril of my life. Oh, Mabel, let there be no further misunderstanding between us. For your sake, and to retrieve my folly, I would brave everything and dare everyone. Only say that you will accept the protection that I offer against the horrors of the pit into which my blindness has plunged you. [*Kneels.*]

Mabel. [*Rising.*] Mr. Raymond Lessing, have you not slightly mistaken me?

Ray. I did mistake you until the day you married Arthur Standish. Then I saw what I had lost. What a wealth of love she could offer whose hate could drive her to the sacrifice of a whole life! But I do not mistake you now, when you tell me that you are wretched, and that your pride and anger are alone to blame for it, for I see that you would spare me and not yourself.

Mabel. Yes, I would spare you and not myself.

Ray. You will let me sue for your pardon on my knees. You will let me read the secret of that heart I lost in my hour of triumph, to find again in my hour of despair! You will let me tell you of the love that has followed you to another's arms, ready when that sacred refuge was denied you, to save you from utter and hopeless misery.

Mabel. Yes, I have let you tell me all this, that my cup of shame might be filled to the brim, and not lack the bitterest ingredient of all—the knowledge that my crime has subjected me to the last insult a woman can bear. [*Rises, stage L.*]

Ray. [*Rising.*] No, not a crime, Mabel. A fault, to revenge yourself on me by marrying another—but not a crime!

Mabel. Am I speaking of you! Miserable one! My crime was to revenge upon an innocent man the treachery I suffered from you!

Ray. You loved me *then*?

Mabel. No! I despised you. But the store of hate you

heaped in my heart I have scattered broadcast among the guiltless. Yes, I have tortured this man who deserved it only by loving me—by trusting me! I have driven him from his home—from his child!

Ray. [*Crosses.*] I know it, and I have come to make what reparation lays in my power.

Mabel. [*Turning short on him.*] Your reparation! If you had a hundred lives to live, and each were offered me, I would hold them lighter than the least breath of the man I have injured. I brought him scorn and hate—he gave me tenderness and love. I brought him falsehood—he gave me constancy and truth. I can speak of him before you, because I am humbled to the dust, and in my wretchedness I can do him no dishonor. [*Crosses R.*]

Ray. Charming! Then you love your husband?

Mabel. I love him? Yes! Heaven is my witness that I love him now, as he loved me. From the moment he left me I knelt and prayed that some judgment might fall upon me, for my wicked blindness. I have begun to suffer what I merit, since I am forced to listen to you.

Ray. [*After a pause.*] I am delighted that your husband is destined to be a happy man. Delighted! I wish he were here to receive the same assurance. As he cannot be, and I will not be permitted to witness your reconciliation, I have no alternative but to bid you good day. [*Aside—as he is going.*] For the second time in my life I have been a fool—and about the same woman! [*Exits down steps.*]

Mabel. This, then, is what it is to suffer. God forgive me what I have caused the father of my child to bear! [*Sinks in chair, R.*]

MATTHEW enters, L. U. E., and watching Lessing then comes down to Mabel.

Matthew. Is that man your accomplice? [*He has the letter of the tramps in his hand, open.*]

Mabel. Sir! [*Mildly, not understanding.*]

Mat. I ask you the name of that man?

Mabel. Raymond Lessing.

Mat. The person for whose sake you insulted your husband in his own house.

Mabel. Yes! [*Breaks down again.*]

Mat. And now your accomplice, who is to assist you in your plot?

Mabel. [*Rises.*] I do not understand

Mat. Look at this paper. It has fallen into my hands by ac-

cident. By some inspiration I comprehend its meaning. You are about to remove your child by stealth. Is it not enough that you cast yourself at the feet of yonder wretch—that you brought him here—here, beneath an honest man's roof, to complete your infamous bargain with him—but you must drag your child with you to this new career of shame?

Mabel [*Appealing.*] Oh! sir, do not drive me back to the madness I have been trying to escape. Have pity on me, I beseech!

Mat. [*Crosses R., behind.*] Beseech me not. I am no dupe of your tardy repentance.

Mabel. [*L. Frenzied.*] On your life I warn you not to drive me, by new insults, to the desperate step I had resolved upon!

Mat. Your threats are as weak as your repentance. Go! Leave this home polluted by the presence of that wretch! Be-gone—join him—when and where you please! As for your child, I will keep him safely, never fear. I have been warned in time! [*Exits into room, R. 1 E.*]

Mabel. Be it so! Hard and implacable old man. It is you, who drive me forth.

MARY *entering from R. 1 E.*

Mary. Mabel, what are you about to do? Take little Arthur from us. You cannot mean it. You shall not do it.

Mabel. Shall not! [*Passionately.*]

Mary. No, no! I should not have said that. I mean only to show you the folly you contemplate.

Mabel. What have you to do with me or my folly? I leave this house free to you and to the man you love—when he comes back. You should be thankful for that. [*Going up.*]

Mary. Oh, you cannot mean—

Mabel. Deny it not! Did I not read your secret the very night he brought me here?

Mary. Mabel! If you have ever known what it is to feel the sting of an insult that spared neither your sex nor your weakness, you can understand what a bitter wrong you have done me by this suspicion. [*Turns away weeping.*]

Mabel. Fool! wretch that I am! how can I hope for pity that shows none. Mary—sister, I was mad! I wished to revenge my own outraged feelings on some one, and like a coward I struck the defenceless. Mary, see I am on my knees to you. Forgive me, poor heart, that has suffered so silently. I am more wretched than you, for I deserve no pity.

Mary. [*Clasps and raises her.*] No, no, no. I love you with

my whole heart. I love your dear little child. I wish you to be happy again, and I came to beg you not to place an eternal bar between you and that happiness.

DOROTHY enters with child asleep, very softly, R. 1 E. MUSIC.

Mabel. [*Darts forward, c.*] My child!

Dorothy. Hush! He's asleep. [*Goes to sofa near fire and lays him down.*] I'll go and see that his bed is prepared. [*Exits, R. U. E.*]

Mary. Oh, sister, for you have called me so! will you not stay with us and with him? He is your guardian angel. [*MABEL kisses her silently and drops on her knees by the sleeping child. MARY, after lingering a moment, goes out, R. U. E.*]

Mabel. [*To Mary.*] Yes, he is my guardian angel! [*After Mary goes out.*] From what sin, what despair, does he not keep me. Oh, Thou! Who hast given him to me so helpless and yet so strong to save, make me worthy of this precious gift. These tiny hands about my neck shall draw me to a better life; this innocent head resting upon my bosom shall cast out my hate and pride. And I will watch over thee, my baby—lest in my hour of guilt, my punishment should come through thee. Oh, dreadful thought! [*Clasping her hands on high.*] No, no, no, not through him. Not through him! spare, my child. [*Pause. Music.*]

RAG. JIM appears at the window, opens it and leaps in lightly.

PAD. appears after him.

Jim. Pst!

Mabel. [*Gets R. of c., in terror.*] No, no, go leave me!

Jim. Now's your time lady! all's clear.

Mabel. I have changed my mind. Here is money. Go, with what you have already it will pay you well.

Jim. [*Eagerly watching child and glancing around the room.*] The horse and wagon are outside, mistress! Let them catch us if they can! we'll give 'em our dust for forty mile. [*Stretches out his arms for the child, who is on sofa, L.*]

Mabel. No, no, do I not tell you I have changed my mind.

Jim. [*Fiercely.*] What of that! I've not changed mine! A bargain's a bargain. [*Dashes her aside, seizes child and flies to window, handing it to PAD., who disappears.*]

Mabel. Help! Help! my child! [*Clutches Jim, who strikes her.*]

Jim. Off! [*MABEL screams, JIM leaps through window, as*

all enter from various doors: MAT., DOR., MARY, DOCTOR, DYMPLÉ and GYLL.]

Mabel. There! Gone! Gone! Ah! [*Falls senseless as RAITCH rushes off c.* MAT. and DOCTOR go to window, the boys after Raitch c.]

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Dr. Gossitt's Study in New York. The Doctor is discovered at desk, c., finishing some writing. A handbill and a mass of opened letters are before him. MUSIC.*

Doctor. There! That's for the morning papers. Twenty thousand dollars reward! Double the offer we have made in our posters and advertisements so far. [*Folding up handbill and writing as he speaks.*] And perhaps we shall have something more satisfactory than these! [*Taps letters.*]

DOROTHY enters R.

Well, how is our patient?

Dorothy. The fever seems to abate! Was it prudent, Doctor, do you think, to bring her here?

Doc. My dear madam, she would have gone raving mad if we did not let her share in our efforts to recover her child. It was a choice between a fever and a coffin, and I preferred the fever.

Dor. [R.] No news yet?

Doc. None!

Dor. And so many searching. Matthew, Mr. Dymple, Mr. Gyll—

Doc. And the whole police force.

Dor. What are those? [*Points to letters in his hand.*]

Doc. Answers to our last advertisement.

Dor. [*Delighted.*] Then he is found? They will bring him to us?

Doc. Not quite! These are the jackals who follow the scent with the hunters. The customary city swindlers trying to rob

grief and mulet misfortune. [*Shows one letter.*] From a person boldly avowing himself a professional thief, who says he knows where the child is concealed, and will tell for five hundred dollars down mailed to his address! [*Shows another.*] From a "Private Detective Agency," hinting at certain mysterious information we can have for five hundred dollars down! [*Shows another.*] From a clairvoyant, who has had extraordinary visions, which she will reveal for five hundred dollars down! [*Folds them up hastily, rises.*] By Jove! I believe all the rascality of the city has fixed its price at five hundred dollars down!

Dor. [*Mysteriously.*] Doctor! [*Looking around.*] I'd try • her.

Doc. Try whom?

Dor. You know! [*He looks at her; she looks around again; he follows her action.*] The clairvoyant. [*Mysteriously.*]

Doc. [*Laughs.*] My dear woman, are you mad?

Dor. It can't do any harm, and I've heard of a person—quite a lady—who lost a watch and went to one of these persons—unknown to her husband, of course.

Doc. Well, did she get the watch?

Dor. No, you see she hadn't any proof except what the clairvoyant said; but she had her suspicions confirmed about a cook she had discharged for drunkenness! It's a fact, I assure you.

Doc. [*Pretending solemnity.*] My dear Miss Dorothy! would you—a Christian woman—invoke the assistance of the powers of darkness in this case?

Dor. Oh, dear no! but if it would lead to the discovery of poor little Arthur—

Doc. You wouldn't mind giving the devil the job.

Dor. [*Shocked.*] Doctor!

Doc. Trust me, my dear lady—if we must have mystery and witchcraft—let's buy our own brimstone and raise the devil ourselves. It's much cheaper.

Dor. Now you're laughing at me.

Doc. No. Not at you. At the clairvoyants. We shall find the villains yet without their help. They have been traced to New York. They are only waiting for the temptation of a large reward, and to-morrow we offer twenty thousand dollars.

Enter DYMPLÉ and GYLL, as if from street, tired.

Well, young gentlemen, what success?

Dymplé. Same as ever! miles of walking and no results.

Thorsby. [*L.*] Done half the city in three days.

Dor. [*Taking his hand.*] Ah, Mr. Dymplé, what a self-sacrificing, unselfish heart you have.

Dym. You see what you lost when you wouldn't have me for a son.

Dor. Never mind! I'm everybody's Aunt Dorothy. I'll be yours.

Dym. That's something. It isn't everybody that has an aunt.

Doc. [R., to *Thors.*] A useless search. I told you so.

Thors. [Crosses to *Doc.*] We must do something! We can't sit down patiently and wait for answers to advertisements. I begin to see what a fraud the census is! Why, there's at least a million girls and babies in New York, let alone men, women and children.

Doc. Have you been to police headquarters, to-day?

Dym. [Crosses to *Doc.*] Yes, and they begin to treat us in an extremely snappish way. We annoy them, I suppose. Nothing annoys police headquarters so much as inquiries after what they ought to find out and can't.

Thors. [Aside to *Dor.*] Any news from—from Deerfield—Miss Dorothy? [*Dym. watches Thors. while Doc. continues to address him in dumb show.*]

Dor. From Mary? Only a letter she sent us to-day.

Thors. Is—is she—well?

Dor. Yes, poor child! I suppose so, at least, for she doesn't speak of herself.

Thors. I think if I were to go up there, and make inquiries in the neighborhood. I might get some clew.

Dor. Oh, no, we have exhausted all means of information there. [*Goes to Doc.*]

Dym. [*Close to Thors.*] I heard you. You want to get a clew, do you? Haven't we sworn to share all our clews together?

Thors. [*Impatiently.*] Oh, you are always suspecting. [*Going to door.*]

Dym. No clews to yourself, old fellow—especially in that quarter—without first consulting me. [*They exit.*]

Doc. Did you show Mabel, Mary's letter? Does she know that her husband is coming?

Dor. I'm afraid to speak to her 'till she asks me.

Doc. And she has not mentioned his name?

Dor. No.

Doc. I can't understand it.

Dor. I can.

Doc. Perhaps so. You women comprehend all the turnings and twistings of that maze you call a woman's heart. Thank

goodness I'm a bachelor. But one thing I know: if this punishment don't soften her—

MATTHEW *enters, L. C., wearily, as from the street.*

never was one more justly—

Matthew. We have no business with that now, Doctor.

Dor. [*Running to him, taking his hat and stick as he sinks wearily on chair.*] Oh, brother!

Doc. My good friend.

Mat. [*Crosses to c.*] I heard your words as I came in. Let us speak of this poor girl's faults no more, Doctor. Heaven has made her its own by a sovereign affliction. She has passed from our censure to the chastisement of One that loves whom he chasteneth.

Doc. You are right.

Dor. [*L.*] Ah, brother, it is good to hear you speak so.

Mat. I have been to blame that I added to this young girl's sorrow.

Dor. You?

Doc. [*R.*] I do not understand.

Mat. You need not, for the present. Doctor, I shall want to consult you by and by. [*To Dor.*] Any news from my son?

Dor. Mary has sent us a telegram from him. It came to Deerfield yesterday. He is on his way from Hampton Roads.

Mat. And Mary?

Dor. [*L.*] She is still on the watch.

Doc. For whom?

Dor. That poor creature, Rachel.

Doc. [*Angrily.*] The hussey! I'm certain now she was in league with the thieves.

Mat. No! I won't believe that.

Doc. Hark ye, Mr. Standish. Your sister has given me that girl's history. Rescued from the very gutters of this metropolis, when a mere infant, by the officers of the Mission, she was sent into your parts of the country, as hundreds of young vagrants like her, for adoption.

Dor. [*L.*] But that was nine years ago.

Doc. [*R.*] Well, her friends or relations have reclaimed her. She has gravitated back to the depths from which she sprang. These kidnappers are her people. Perhaps her parents. That's the whole story.

Dor. What? Go back willingly to them—after the way I brought her up?

Doc. [*R.*] Why haven't we heard from her?

Dor. Like enough they keep her under lock and key.

Doc. She was seen in the wagon when they drove off—she wasn't under lock and key then. If she turns out to be anything better than the thieves she ran off with, I'll take my own physic, that's all.

Mat. I'll trust the girl. If these wretches have not killed her, we shall hear from her in good time. [*To Dor., bringing her down; Doc. sits at desk.*] Mabel—is she better—does she speak of me—of him, her husband, of anyone but her child?

Dor. Of little Arthur—no one but little Arthur. But, brother, I was sitting in the chair near the sofa where she lay—she thought me asleep, for I had been dozing—when I saw her take a letter from her bosom and read it with streaming eyes. I recognized it. It was the one she got from Arthur when he went away. It is the only bit of his writing that she possesses. I watched her read it when she could hardly see a word in it for the tears in her eyes! Oh, brother! there is a Providence in affliction. [*Street door bell heard.*]

Doc. [*Starts up.*] Visitors! Perhaps some news!

Mat. [*Wiping his eyes.*] Yes, good news!

Doc. Eh? How do you know?

Mat. I know. [*Smiling.*] For my heart tells me so.

Doc. My heart never tells me anything when the street door bell rings.

Mat. It's Dorothy's news—news for a father to hear. I can only repeat her words, Doctor, there's a Providence in affliction.

DYMPLE, L., outside.

Dymple. Come right in. [*Enters with a parcel open in his hand.*] News! We have something at last. [*MARY and THORS. follow in, L. 1 D.*]

Mat. Mary.

Mary. [*Kissing Mat. and Dor., and taking Doc.'s hand.*] I came as soon as I got it.

Doc. Got what?

Mary. A parcel by express—this morning. Look, Uncle! It is Rachel's frock. The one she wore when they took her away.

Dor. Her frock?

Mary. Wrapped up! Here it is! I couldn't stay there and write to you. I had to come.

Doc. [*DYM. crosses to him.*] Let me see it. [*Takes frock from Dym.*] Did you search the pockets? [*Does so.*] Nothing! What does it mean? [*Looks over it.*] Is there no paper pinned to it? Where's the wrapper it came in?

Dym. Not a word here but the direction. [*Gives the paper to Doe and takes frock, and he and THORS. examine it together.*]

Mat. I think I understand what it means.

Mary. What is that, Uncle?

Mat. The villains wish us to understand by this that any recognition of the girl by her clothes is useless. It was one mark by which the detectives were to know her.

Mary. I had a terrible suspicion, Uncle, that they had killed her and sent this dumb message to tell the dreadful story.

Dor. No, no! they would not dare do that.

Thors. [*Aside to Mary.*] Don't fret, Miss Mary.

Dym. I say, Doctor—I think, if, instead of sending us a dress they had sent us an address, it would have been more to the purpose.

Mary. [*To Dor.*] Is Mabel awake? [*DOR. nods and points off.*] May I go to her? Is she well enough to see me?

Dor. Certainly.

Thors. This way, Miss Mary.

Mary. Thank you. [*She passes out with DOR., R.*]

Dym. [*Who has been cut out by Thors. in showing Mary out, following and slapping Thors. on the back.*] Serpent!

Thors. [*Guiltily, returning and taking hold of the dress.*] Let's have another look at the frock, Sammy.

Dym. [*Tears it from him.*] No, sir! You follow your clue. I'll have this one to myself. [*Off, L., THORS. R.*]

Mat. [*L., to Doe.*] Now quick, my friend—while we are alone together. As I came in just now, a messenger, near the door, gave me an envelope—here it is—and immediately disappeared. A shabby looking old man—see, a sheet on which are pasted words cut from a book or paper. [*The Doctor takes the paper.*] He did not wait for me to open it, as you may suppose.

Doe. [*Finishes reading and turns paper over.*] Humph!

Mat. What do you think of it?

Doe. A trap.

Mat. [*L.*] You believe it?

Doe. Plain as day. An appointment at night—behind a churchyard—a desperate and deserted neighborhood—a mere plan to rob you.

Mat. But the letter itself—exactly similar to the one left by the tramps at Deerfield. The sender offers to give the child into my own hands, if I will come to his terms.

Doe. He couldn't offer a better bait. And you are to go there alone. Alone, understand, with the money—a likely story.

Mat. The sender warns me expressly to seek no aid from the police.

Doc. And very properly, if he wishes to get you in his power.

Mat. But we dare not neglect any means—even the most dangerous or the least promising—to find my grandson. I am not afraid. I will go.

Doc. You will?

Mat. Yes.

Doc. Then what the devil did you ask my advice for?

Mat. I merely wished to let you know where I proposed going to-night.

Doc. Very well. Now I know, I shall have Captain Steers and half a dozen of his best officers there to look after you.

Mat. I beg you will do nothing of the kind. I need no protection. I have seen the vagabonds your police pointed out to me as the thieves and burglars of the metropolis. I believe I am a match for half a dozen of them.

Doc. [R.] My dear sir, this is the usual New England estimate of its own ability. Don't disparage our burglars, I beg. They are the only things we New Yorkers take a just pride in.

Mat. [Seriously.] I value my life as nothing, Doctor, compared to the reparation I owe Mabel. I have wronged her deeply—if I am to atone for it by this sacrifice, I am ready. But something tells me that I have this mystery now in my grasp. [As he is about to go, MAT. looks off R. and then detains the Doc. DOC. advances R. with outstretched arms, and MAT. shyly draws back.]

Doc. Mabel! It is the first time she has been out of her room.

MABEL enters, R., supported on MARY's arm.

My dear, this is imprudent; you are not well enough yet. [Gently.]

Mabel. [Nervously.] But I cannot sit there all alone. I must help you—go somewhere—do something to aid your search. [MAT. sinks in chair.]

Doc. [Gently.] You can help us all and give us aid by your patience—by brave and courageous patience.

Mabel. Have I not been patient? But you tell me nothing. Rachel has sent to us. What does it mean? What do you intend doing?

Doc. We must think about it, dear. This dress is as great a mystery as any we have had to deal with.

Mabel. It is all clear to me. It means that some one is

thinking of us—that the broken link is reuniting and a hand is stretched out to us through the darkness. It is a message of hope Doctor, sent by that poor girl, but it is also a call to us for help. Can we not help her? Where she is, my child is.

Doc. If we could help her we would do it instantly; but there is no word—no suggestion how to reach her. Trace the parcel back step by step to her we may—but that requires time and the exercise of judgment.

Mabel. This is what is so hard to bear. You want time! time! time! You always say so. Is it possible my child can be taken from me—carried through villages and towns in broad day—and no one question? How are the people found who flee with no burden save the guilt they carry in their bosoms? Why did no one stop these ruffians bearing a delicate child! or if they hide has the law no net to drag the depths which conceal them? [*Crosses to L.*]

Doc. The law is doing its best—but we don't rely on that—we are all searching.

Mabel. [*Back to him.*] And can I do nothing? I have heard of mothers in other times who went through the streets calling aloud at every door, so that at sound of their voices their little ones might cry out and so discover themselves. The rudest people respected their grief—kind but hardy friends sprang up at every step and helped them in the search.

Doc. We can do much better in these days, my dear. A hundred mighty agencies are at work for us. The avarice and greed of men search more diligently than even a mother's love! We have doubled the reward we offered: cupidity or treachery must soon disclose him.

Mabel. [*Crosses to Mary.*] Who then is searching?

Mary. [*R.*] All of our friends—Thorsby, I mean Mr. Gyll, Mr. Dymple—and, above all, one whose feet never weary pacing the streets to bring back little Arthur.

Mabel. [*Doc. gets L.*] Of whom do you speak? [*The Doc. and MARY stand aside so as to reveal Mat.*] He? [*A struggle of resentment and emotion.*] Mr. Standish.

Mary. [*To Mabel.*] You may call him by another name now, Mabel! He could not do more were he indeed your father.

MATTHEW advances with hesitancy and timidity.

Mat. There is no merit in any sacrifice I or mine make you you, my child. I—an old man—stern in my fancied integrity and sense of right—humble myself before you, whom I wronged by my cruel and unjust suspicions that day. I ask your pardon, my daughter. [*She holds out her hand, he takes it, then as she,*

giving way to her feelings, begins to sob, he draws her softly to his bosom.] There, there! my poor child. [*Wipes his own eyes.*] It is I who have brought this misfortune on you. Gentle words, kindness from me—might have averted it. I owe you reparation and I promise it. You shall have your child again, I promise it. I—there—there. [*Resigns her to Mary, and as he is going L., aside to Doc.*] Do you wonder that I risk my life? It belongs to her! [*Exits, L. 1 E.*]

Doc. [*Aside.*] What a wonderful deal of good a little trouble does for us. This baby will be a blessing yet. [*Exits after Mat., L.*]

Mary. Do not despair, my darling. For Arthur loved you—and he is returning.

Mabel. Yes, and by so much as he loved me he will not forgive me.

Mary. Put away the thought. The heart that can feel so much will soften.

Mabel. There is only One who forgives, who embraces, who feeds and who spares them that trample on His love. And even that forgiveness I dare not invoke. [*Exeunt, R.*]

DYMPLE, L. 1 E., *re-enters with frock in his hand.*

Dymple. There they go! The only two women whom I ever loved. One I couldn't get, and the other I can't. I watched her with Thorsby. When I talk to her she looks me straight in the eye; when he talks to her she looks at his boots. I've noticed the peculiarity in the female sex before. They won't meet your eye if they love you for fear you'll discover the fact too soon. Well, they've both gone from me forever, and I'm left with this gingham! This gown, like everything else pertaining to woman-kind, eludes, avoids and baffles me. I have literally turned it inside out and upside down—explored the tucks, verified the seams and inspected the gathers, and yet it is a wrinkle beyond me. [*As he is feeling about the waist-band he touches something and stops.*] There is a peculiar lumpiness about this particular portion of the anatomy! I wish I was a dressmaker! I wonder if its natural. [*Takes out penknife.*] I've been tempted half a dozen times to rip it open! [*Cuts the dress.*] If its nothing. By jove, it is something. It's a piece of paper. A piece of brown paper. There's nothing on it! A substitute I suppose for buckram. A piece of paper—full of pin holes. Evidently a pin-cushion before its incarceration in its late place of interment. [*Holds it up suddenly, then calls.*] Thorsby! Thorsby!

THORSBY *enters*, R. 1 E.,

Thorsby. Well?

Dym. Come here! Look! Take this! Look at it! Do you see anything? Hold it up to the light.

Thors. Full of holes. Pin-holes.

Dym. Then I'm not blind! Pin-holes that make letters and words.

Thors. Letters and words?

Dym. Look here! this is a word! P-R-O-M-I-S-E—promise written as clear as pen and ink could make it.

Thors. So it is. "Promise!"

Dym. Give me air! Don't go away! Oh, if it should be something.

Thors. [*Reads over Dym's shoulders.*] "Promise made to me!"

Dym. What's that next line?—"at"—what's this? "Beggars' Paradise." "Promise made to me at Beggars Paradise!" where's that?

Thors. I never heard of a beggar's paradise. Perhaps the paper will explain.

Dym. It does. "Promise made to me at Beggars Paradise—Thames Street." Where's that? Ever been there?

Thors. [*Continuing.*] "Thames Street—near the river!"

Dym. [*Continuing.*] "I am to share in the reward!" It's all as clear as day.

Thors. Is it?

Dym. I see it all.

Thors. So do I—all there is to see—and that's not much.

Dym. Isn't there? It's a clew. Beggars Paradise. Thames Street near the river!—we'll go there!

Thors. You're a lunatic.

Dym. Am I. This paper is either a hint to us, or a tell-tale record of a partner in the stealing. There's no accident about it, Thorsby. Pins never did this by themselves.

Thors. [*Crosses L.*] Let's ask the Doctor.

Dym. Not for worlds. It may be nothing—it may be something. Let's find out first. Will you go with me?

Thors. Won't I.

Dym. Beggar's Paradise! Let's be a couple of Peris and knocks at the gate of paradise. Thorsby you can have the other clew—I mean the other girl, all to yourself. This clew and this girl with her new-fashioned pin-pointed handwriting belongs to me. Patent applied for! [*Exeunt, L.*]

[CHANGE.]

SCENE II.—*The wall behind Trinity Churchyard. Snow. Old posters cover it. Among them one or two as follows:*

“\$10,000 Reward! Child Stolen. This sum will be paid to any person restoring to his parents ARTHUR STANDISH, a child, 2½ years of age. Light complexion. Blue eyes. Mole on the ear. Had on when stolen from his home, at Old Deerfield, Mass., a white frock, white socks, blue kid boots. Apply to Matthew Standish at Old Deerfield; or to Henry Gossitt, M.D., 14 Washington Square; or to the Chief of Police!”

Another handbill reads: “\$1000 Reward! Will be paid by the Trustees of the Town of Deerfield, Mass., for the return of ARTHUR STANDISH, a child, stolen on the 13th of November. Description: 2½ years old, etc., etc.” — — — as above.

ARTHUR STANDISH enters, R, in naval uniform, cloak; followed by a sailor carrying a valise.

Standish. You only have to go with me to the Park, Rattlin. There I'll get a carriage. Then you may wait ashore with the boys.

Rattlin. Thank your honor for the leave. They'll be glad enough to get a whiff of land air.

Stan. But keep them together, and wait at the ferry house for me 'till one o'clock. I may return on board to-night. And no drinking, mind! You see that group yonder? Policemen! Land marines, as you call them! don't fall into their hands.

Rat. Never fear, your honor! We hates a policeman as we hates the devil! [*Retires up.*]

Stan. Called back again, but not by her. Other voices summon me. Not a word—not a line from Mabel. Even the loss of her child does not soften her hard and icy heart. But what of that? Let me lay her infant once more in her arms and my duty is done. [*Exits, L., followed by RAT. MUSIC.*]

After a pause MATTHEW STANDISH strolls on, R.

Matthew. This is the place. No one in sight save the two yonder; and now they turn the corner and are gone. It's a quiet spot, indeed. Just the place for an ambush. Ugh! In the heart of this populous city I wait and watch as my ancestors did two hundred years ago in the woods of Deerfield, when the stealthy savage lurked in the darkness.

PICKER BOB *has entered, L., during above, with sack on back and basket on arm, pick in hand. He watches Mat., and when latter turns, BOB pretends to be groping for rags.*

Picker Bob. [*Nearing Mat.*] Cold night, sir! [*Crosses to R.*]

Mat. [*Suspiciously.*] Very.

P. B. Too cold to be out alone!

Mat. I need no company for what I have to do.

P. B. Are you sure?

Mat. Quite sure.

P. B. So much the better! [*Exits, R.*]

Mat. Who can he be? A picket thrown out to reconnoitre?

PADDER *enters, smoking a pipe, L. Dog under his arm. Dressed like a dog fancier.*

Padder. Evenin', friend.

Mat. Good evening.

Pad. Want to buy a dog?

Mat. No, I thank you.

Pad. Perhaps you havn't got the money handy to pay for him.

Mat. Perhaps not.

Pad. Or p'raps yer a savin' up yer soap for another kind o' commodity.

Mat. You've hit it, my man.

Pad. Well, you won't get it. [*Crosses to R.*]

Mat. Why not?

Pad. [*Indicating police, off L. H.*] Too many bidders at the sale, that's all. [*Exits, R.*]

Mat. These gentlemen speak in parables. He comes back. Can it be the rascal I'm to deal with?

Re-enter PADDER, R.

Padder. I say.

Mat. What do you say?

Pad. [*Meaningly.*] Do you know the way to the nearest police station?

Mat. No!

Pad. Then where did you get the crowd of cops at the crossing yonder?

Mat. I did not get them.

Pad. Look ye, governor! Don't waste your time here. It's a dangerous place—and particularly for a cove what can't move

through the streets without a peeler at his heels. Take my advice. Go home. I'm going, understand! It's late! Shops shut up! No business to be done to-night. Go home! Understand? [*Exits, after laying his finger on his nose several times, R.*]

Mat. I understand! These rascals have taken alarm at the Doctor's police. I must get rid of them. [*Makes a step towards L.*]

RAGMONEY JIM, *disguised as a beggar cripple, enters.*

Jim. Send me, your honor!

Mat. Who are you? Send you where?

Jim. [*L.*] You want to call the police up there, or you want to pack them off about their business. I'm a poor fellow in want of a job. I'll run for you—

Mat. [*Aside.*] Another! why it's a hornet's nest. [*Aloud.*] Yes, go tell the officers I shall not need them and that I request them to watch me no further.

Jim. Oh, they wouldn't take my word, your honor.

Mat. Ask the captain to come here, then.

Jim. Aye, that's the business. [*Gives low, soft cry like a bird. It's answered by another in the distance.*] That'll do it. You'll excuse my not waiting till he comes. [*Crosses to R.*]

Mat. But—

Jim. You want to know what to do with yourself when the cops are gone? Why, come on an errand of charity. My poor old wife will show you the way. I'll send her. You'll see our poor little children, especially the Youngest! And you'll take such a sudden benevolent interest in us as never was. Follow the old woman. I'll send her— [*meaningly*] when you're alone! mind—alone!

Exits, R., as Padder enters, L., followed by CAPTAIN OF POLICE.

Padder. There's the genelman as sent me! [*Steps behind house, L., and listens.*]

Captain. We are on hand, sir! Eight of us—some in the churchyard looking over at us now, some up by Trinity building—all within call.

Mat. My dear captain! There are just eight too many of you. You must leave me to myself—unattended—unwatched—or, I shall discover nothing.

Pad. [*L., aside.*] That's gospel.

Capt. Well, sir, as you please. But it's a dangerous game you're playing.

Mat. Have no fear. I can play it.

Capt. As you please, sir. I'll draw off my men. [*Aside.*] It's lucky his son has just turned up and met us too. I'll consult him. The old gentleman will have his own way, but there's no help for it. [*PAD. watches him off, L., CAPT. pokes him in stomach with club as he passes. PAD. doubles up.*]

Pad. He will have his joke, the dear, funny—old, infernal cop! But it's done. Now, to be sure that they hoist sail and sheer off. There's old mother witch now, prompt as a dinner bell. [*Exits, L.*]

Mat. It's a desperate game! A shrewd gang of rascals. But if there are so many out in the streets upon the watch, I shall have fewer to deal with in whatever den they lead me to.

MOTHER THAMES enters and stands by entrance, R. She is an old crooning hag, dressed much like a rag-picker, with her head half enveloped in an old shawl.

You come for me? [*She nods and points off, then beckons him.*] Go on. Show me the way. I'll follow you. [*Exeunt, R.*]

PADDER re-entering from L.

Padder. Yes. She'll show him the way—the long way—up the streets and down the streets: for it's a hard road to Paradise! [*Looks back.*] The cops don't follow. All's well! [*Gives a crow, off, like that of a cock. It is answered by another.*] Good enough! Now for a short cut and in at the brush. Fifty thousand dollars! It's too good to be true! Much too lovely to be realized! But we'll have it if Ragmoney can make it. [*Exits, R.*]

[CHANGE.]

SCENE III.—“*Beggars Paradise.*” *Interior of a decayed house, showing the attic and the room beneath it. A door and window in attic. Window C. Door R. Trap-door in floor of attic, and ladder reaching from it to the stage. In room beneath, a door L. C., window C. Door at R. of same room and window L. The attic is furnished with a small stool and a pallet-bed on floor. The room beneath is furnished with a stove, in a sand-box. Table C. Two stools and a long bench L., a straw mattress, and old blanket. Night. No light in the rooms. Snow falling. Over the roof is seen the tops of surrounding houses, the telegraph poles, etc. A stairway leading up from a lower floor at L. C.*

MUSIC.—DYMPLÉ and THORSBY creep up the stairs, L. C., cautiously. Both very much wrapped up and variously armed.

Dymple. Nobody here, either.

Thorsby. [C.] No wonder—who would stay in such a hole?

Dym. [L.] We have the solemn word of the policeman on the beat, that this was Beggars Paradise.

Thors. Yes, but he also informed us that no one lived in the old trap, now—that it had been deserted since the murder of a thief by his companion—six months ago.

Dym. Well, nobody may live here. But if our pin-point memorandum is not a delusion, somebody has been here within a week, and the very people we want, too.

Thors. [At stove] The stove’s warm—and the remnants of a fire in it. That’s not bad for a deserted house.

Dym. Stove, eh! [Groping for it—knocks his head against the ladder.] What the deuce is this! a ladder!

Thors. A ladder!

Dym. [Rubs his head.] Yes, a hard ladder. It’s an invitation to mount higher.

Thors. To the roof, I suppose.

Dym. Or the top story of Paradise. [Goes up.]

Thors. [At stove, trying to warm his hand.] Look out for your head and the scuttle.

Dym. [Pushes up trap.] I’ve got it.

Thors. [Flapping his arms.] Hold on to your hat, the wind blows hard in high latitudes.

Dym. No wind here! And no roof! Dark as pitch! It’s another room. [Enters attic.]

Thors. [Listening below, over stairs.] That sounds like a footstep. Some one’s coming up. [Calling up ladder.] Sammy!

Dym. [*Who has been groping about, stops.*] Well?

Thors. [*Alarmed and in whisper.*] Somebody's coming!

Dym. Come up here then, quick.

Thors. There's more than one. [*Runs up ladder—when at top.*] Do you hear them?

Dym. Quick! Shut the trap! [*They close it gently. Then kneel breathlessly and peep through holes in floor.*]

RAGMONEY JIM *enters up the stairs with a candle, L.*

Jim. [*To person below.*] What the devil are you waiting for, come up.

RAITCH *enters, dressed in rags, her face dirty; she wears a wicked and scowling expression.*

Raitch. [*L.*] I was a listening.

Jim. What for?

Rai. Voices, I thought.

Jim. Couldn't be. [*Looks around.*] You're getting squeamish.

Rai. [*Indignantly.*] No, I'm not. But what wonder, after the scare we had an hour ago, that drove us all kiting out of this trap.

Jim. I thought the cops were on us sure enough—curse 'em.

Rai. Then this is a ticklish moment, Jim. It's win or lose everything to-night.

Jim. So it is, gal. You're right. Nothing like caution. You're your father's daughter, you are, and I'm proud of such a niece. The psalm singing duffers haven't spoiled you, Sally—for all the years they had you.

Rai. Can you spoil the real stuff, Jim? Ain't true grit like true gold. Won't it shine as bright and feel as hard and ring as sharply after all its hoarding?

Jim. So it will.

Rai. I've only been saved up for the old trade, I have, Jim. Saved up to make our fortunes.

Jim. So you have.

Rai. And yet you doubted me at first. You wanted to put me out of the way, you did, Jim.

Jim. I axes your pardon, Sally. I didn't know you was the old sort at heart. Oh, you're a prize, Sally.

Rai. [*Savagely.*] And yet you keep me like a prisoner.

Jim. We're so fond of you, Sally. Besides, you've got a soft spot in you yet. You would send back that frock of yours. My mind ain't easy about it yet. It may get us into trouble.

Dym. So it may.

Rai. I didn't want their charity frock, Jim. We're in for bigger game than frocks. And what harm can come of it. Didn't you search it. [*Laughs boisterously.*] I tell you, Jim, it will take a smart feller to spell anything out of that frock. [*Crosses to R.*]

Dym. So it did. Eh! Thorsby.

Jim. [L.] Well, p'raps it's all right. But where's mother Thames? She's to go for the old 'um, where's she?

Rai. [*Points off L.*] In there. Mad as ever. I say, Jim, how long has she been cracked. She wasn't so when I was a young 'un here before.

Jim. Ever since her husband was hanged, and the babby she was nursing died that same day in her arms. Go get her. [*RAI. exits, L.*]

Dym. It's Raitch, sure enough.

Thors. They call her Sally. She's evidently one of the gang.

Dym. I can't make it out.

Thors. We'll have a healthy time getting out.

MOTHER THAMES enters with ARTHUR in rags, sleeping, following
RAITCH.

Jim. Now then, old woman.

Mother Thames. Hush! You'll wake him.

Jim. No we won't. [*Takes the child.*]

Mo. Th. Is he dead?

Jim. No, you fool.

Mo. Th. What did they kill my baby for! He was not sentenced. Wasn't poor Bill enough! Stiff and cold! Cold and dead! He had done no harm. Give me my baby.

Jim. By-and-bye. By-and-bye. I'll keep him safe till then. Hark ye! an old man is waiting by the churchyard wall. Go bring him here.

Mo. Th. Was he one of them that hanged my man?

Jim. Yes.

Mo. Th. And you mean to kill him—you mean to kill him!

Jim. Yes. To squeeze the money from him first, and the life from him afterwards.

Mo. Th. I'll go! I'll go! [*Draws shawl round her, goes up.*]

Rai. I'll show you the way.

Jim. [*Rudely shoving her back.*] No, you stay here!

Mo. Th. I know the way! I know! with the crook of my

finger I'll bring him here. Trust me. When the death is on them they come. My boy went. Trust me. He'll come. [*Exits L., staggering. JIM puts the child roughly on the pallet.*]

Rai. Shall I take him.

Jim. No! [*Savagely.*] Havn't I told you so a thousand times. I'll trust him to no one, out of my arms, but to that mad woman. I defy the devil himself to get the brat from her, while she holds him in her arms and thinks in her crazy way that it's her dead child. He's safe there. He sleeps soundly. That last dose I gave him—

Arthur. [*Waking.*] Mamma!

Jim. The devil! He's up again; light that fire! Ah, my precious kid, you want your mamma, do you.

Arthur. Mamma!

Jim. Your mamma's coming, my dear! I'm the new nurse, I am.

Thors. [*Astonished.*] It's the baby. We've got 'em.

Dym. More likely they've got us.

Thors. What shall we do?

Dym. Wait and see.

Jim. Baby must go to sleep again. Sally, dear, where's the lovely sweet syrup of sugar plums.

Rai. [*Gets phial and spoon.*] More drugs. Be careful, Jim.

Jim. Oh, I'll be careful. Baby must have a sweet sleep and dream of mamma. Baby must sleep, or mamma won't come.

Arthur. [*Putting the spoon away.*] No.

Jim. You don't like it, eh! Not when it's own Jim gives it to it's pretty baby.

Arthur. No. [*Pushes it away again.*]

Jim. What, you won't! [*Gets whip from under mattress.*]

Rai. Don't beat him again, Jim. I won't have it.

Dym. I would like to give Mr. Jim some of that medicine for himself!

Jim. Then make him take the dose, you suiveling fool. [*She gives dose to child. JIM throws whip down.*] There! Hollo! who the devil left this ladder here?

Rai. [*Watching the child, who sleeps.*] You did.

Jim. I must have forgot. [*Takes it away.*]

Dym. [*Aghast with terror.*] He's taken away the ladder.

Thors. Now we are gone.

Dym. [*Rising.*] There's a window!

Thors. [*Goes to it.*] Three stories from the ground.

Dym. But the telegraph pole is not five feet from it. I could jump it if I had to.

Thors. [*Tries door, R.*] Here's a door.

Dym. A door?

Thors. But it's locked!

Dym. Oh!

PADDER entering up the stairs below.

Padder. He's coming.

Jim. The child?

Rai. Fast asleep! the drug's done it again.

Jim. Hide him! Under the pallet!

Rai. Under the pallet? You forget what's under the pallet!

Jim. I know what I'm about. Under the pallet! [*RAI. raises the pallet and conceals Arthur in a space below.*]

Pad. Look ye, Jim! I think I ought to have the kid for safe keeping.

Jim. [*R.*] You do—do you?

Pad. Yes, I do. While you've got him, you hold all the cards. What sort of a game is that for half a dozen to play?

Jim. Now see here, Padder—

Dym. Thorsby!

Thors. What?

Dym. That's my rascally valet. Oh, why did I ever part with him! But I won't after to-night.

Jim. No more words now! Go to the room below. You've no business to come up. Go below with the others.

Pad. There's enough there.

Jim. And there's enough here! Go, I tell you!

Pad. All right! All right! So long as you leave him under the pallet I'm satisfied. I can have him if I want him.

Dym. Yes, and I'm satisfied. I'll have you when you don't want me.

Jim. Away! They're coming. [*PAD. hurries down stairs, L. c. RAI. into room R. MUSIC.*]

MOTHER THAMES enters by door in back, L. c., followed by MATTHEW. She points to Jim and goes back and off by same door.

MAT. looks at Jim, and then looks around suspiciously.

No fear, Governor! we are alone here, you and me.

Matthew. [*L. c.*] I wish to be sure of that.

Jim. You shall be. [*Goes to each door and bolts it.*] There! Take a seat. We can talk at our ease.

Mat. [*Sits by table.*] You are the writer of this letter.

Jim. Yes.

Mat. You can restore my grandchild to me?

Jim. I can.

Mat. Where is he?

Jim. Safe enough! Pay for him and he's yours.

Mat. Are you the man that took him from my home.

Jim. [R.] Don't you remember me?

Mat. [Looks at him.] Yes, I remember you! I fed you when you were starving, and instead of sending you to jail for a vagrant, I gave you shelter in my house.

Jim. Why, as for that, Governor, I was no more starving than you are! And as for not sending me to jail—the more fool you—

Mat. Where is the child? Here?

Jim. Oh, no! we don't keep such precious jewels here. We have a safe deposit vault of our own. Pay our price and you can have him.

Mat. What is your price.

Jim. [Impressively.] Fifty thousand dollars, down.

Mat. You are mad.

Jim. Oh, no, I'm not. You're rich! You'd give half a million rather than know this boy was lost to you forever. But I'm not extortionate. Fifty thousand!

Mat. You don't expect me to carry such a sum.

Jim. Oh, no! I'm not unreasonable. You've got twenty, perhaps, with you—or ten—even five! I'll take that and give you time for the rest.

Mat. How much time?

Jim. Half an hour.

Mat. And suppose I have no money with me?

Jim. You shall have half an hour to get it.

Mat. [Rising] Very well! I'll be back in half an hour.
[JIM rises quickly and lays his hand on Mat.'s arm.]

Jim. [Catching his arm.] Oh, no! We'll send. We couldn't trouble you to go yourself.

Mat. [Coolly.] And that means?—

Jim. That you must stay here.

Mat. [Sitting again.] My good fellow, you have locked all the doors. That is to say, you have put yourself in my power. I have only to stretch out my hand and you will be completely at my mercy.

Jim. [Leaning over the table and slowly eyeing him.] You'll try your strength with me.

Mat. Certainly. [Suddenly grasping his wrist.] So think better of it. Give me the child or tell me where it is!

Forces JIM, after a struggle, to his knees. Meanwhile the door on the L. opens, and a man masked, dressed like a laborer, enters, carrying a pick. He stands by the window. This is PICKER BOB.

Jim. Well played, Governor! Give me time to think. Five seconds will do. Give me five seconds and you shall have my answer. [*On his knees.*]

Another masked man enters—it is PADDY—from door C., flat, carrying an axe. He stands down by L. door.

Mat. You have your five seconds.

Jim. And you have your answer.

Two men also, masked and disguised as laborers, enter at R.; they carry a spade and an iron bar, and confront Mat. He sees them, releases Jim and turns slowly. As he does so, another ruffian enters from door C., and stands by it.

Would you like to try your strength with me now, eh? [*Down R. C., baring his arms.*]

Mat. What do you wish, gentlemen?

Jim. Write a letter to the mother of this child. Tell her to come here—alone—and with the money we demand. With her jewels, too—do you hear? we know she has them and what they are worth. [*Puts pen, ink and paper on table, which he gets from shelf before window.*] Write, and quickly.

Mat. I'll write! [*Aside.*] It may gain time. [*He advances to the table and writes. The men around the room are as immovable as statues.*] There!

Jim. [*Picks it up and reads.*] What? So near? At a hotel, eh? They all followed you down so's to be handy, did they. So much the better. We won't have long to wait. Here, mother!

MOTHER THAMES enters, followed by RAITCH.

Take this! [*Whispers in her ear.*] You understand?

Mother Thames. I understand. [*Shows knife.*]

Jim. That's handy, if they try any of their tricks on you. Quick! [*She exits at back.*]

Mat. One bold push, and I'll be before her.

Jim. [*Bolts L. C.*] There.

Dym. Why can't we shoot him at once. [*Pulls out very large horse pistol.*]

Thors. There are six of 'em. Wait.

Dym. Wait! While we wait they'll bring Mabel here.

Thors. Hush! Look at the old man.

Mat. [*Who had passed down R. C., near a stool or broken chair.*] The window can't be far from the ground. I've leaped many a time further than that.

Jim. Come, Governor, sit down and be patient. The old gal won't be long. She's a little flighty in the head, but she goes an errand like a bullet to its mark. These are all good fellows. Owing to the very strong light of the candle they have to wear shades, but that rather improves their appearance.

Mat. Aye, they look like agreeable fellows, and so, if you don't object, I'll—[*Suddenly fells Jim with the chair*] I'll say good night to you all. [*Darts to the window, places foot on bench and tries to get out.*]

Jim. [*On floor.*] Seize him! stop him! [*All lay hold of MAT. A scuffle between him and the men, and JIM, who seizes a rope from the pallet. DYM. and THORS., in their excitement, run up and down the attic. MAT. is finally brought to his knees.*] Hark! [*A dead silence ensues. DYM. and THORS. stand petrified.*] I heard a noise up there! in the attic.

Dym. We are gone!

Jim. [*To Rai.*] You, there! up and see what it is! [*RAI. goes to door, R., and exits.*]

Dym. She's coming up here.

Thors. Shall we shoot her?

Dym. No use. Shooting her won't kill the others.

RAITCH enters attic by door, R., looks at them. They gaze at her, transfixed. She goes to the trap and opens it.

Jim. [*Looking up.*] Well?

Raitch. [*Peeping through scuttle.*] There's nobody here!

Jim. Are you sure?

Rai. Yes. [*She exits, looking back at Thors. and Dym. without uttering word or sign.*]

Jim. Secure him. [*They pinion the old man noiselessly and wait.*]

Thors. Thank Heaven!

Dym. She's a trump!

Thors. Do you know if her face was washed she'd be rather a pretty girl.

Dym. [*Peremptorily.*] None of that! She belongs to me. She's my clew. I've got her frock, and damme, I will have her.

RAITCH *re-enters below.*

Jim. What was it?

Raitch. Rats. [*THORS. looks at Dym. and bursts into a suppressed laugh. DYM. punches him in side indignantly.*]

Thors. I say, Dymple, you're a rat!

Dym. A live rat! that's some comfort.

Jim. [*To men.*] Tie him to the rail yonder. [*They fasten him, kneeling, to the bannister at c.*] It was a bold stroke, Governor. A risky thing, though, for one of your years. But I admire your pluck.

Mat. Well. I'm in your power.

Jim. Of course you are. You're a rich man, Governor! owner of ten mills and factories, worth four or five millions, but just now you're in the hands of the laboring class, the hard-fisted men of toil.

Mat. Thieves, you mean.

Jim. That's right, call us thieves—that's all you can do. We call you rich men thieves—that's all we can do. But now we'll have no hard names. We'll adjust the differences between capital and labor in a quiet way. You hire eight hundred men to work for you. You've made your millions out of them. It isn't fair. Share your profits with them as earned 'em.

Mat. Did any of you wretches ever work for me? No! I won't believe it.

Jim. No. We're simply a committee of the whole. We can't bring the eight hundred here. I'm chairman! My name's Ragmoney Jim.

Mat. Humph—you're Ragmoney Jim!

Jim. Yes. Don't sneer! I'm Ragmoney by name, but I'm hard money by principle. But they call me Ragmoney because I haven't got any money at all. And as I read in the papers that rag money's no money, why the name suits me exactly.

Mat. Well!

Jim. [*Sits R. c.*] Padder, the chair appoints you a committee to search the capitalist and find out how much of our money he's got about him.

Padder. All right! [*Searches him.*] Not a red!

Jim. [*Throwing chair away, angrily.*] What! Nothing? A regular plant. You never meant honest and fair then, did you, when you came after the child. Damme if I ever trusts a Massachusetts Yankee again.

Pad. He came here to nose out our secret. He's a spy.

All. Yes, a spy!

Jim. What shall we do with the spy, lads?

All. [*Intensely, but not loud.*] Kill him!

Jim. You hear these gentlemen. They actually feel that you're too mean to live. And I'm of their opinion.

Pick. Bob. Here's my axe handy.

Jim. [*Crosses to Mat.*] Come, what do you say. [*PAD. whispers to him as if dissuading him.*]

Dym. Now or never, Thorsby! It's to save his life we must risk ours. Is the window open?

Thors. [*Holds it open.*] Yes.

Dym. Take my pistol. If the worst comes to the worst before I come back, give it to them hot and heavy. As for me, I'll go for the police. Here's the pole and here goes, by telegraph. [*Gets out.*]

Thors. Look out, old fellow! There! He's on it. He slides down. The deuce, he's torn his trousers to ribbons. He's on the ground! He's off! [*Closes window and returns to watch.*]

Jim. [*Nodding and putting Pad. off.*] All right! [*To Mat.*] Well, are you dumb?

Rai. [*Coming down R. c.*] Speak out, Governor, don't be shy.

Mat. [*To her.*] You belong to this wretched life in earnest then. Blood will tell after all.

Rai. Aye. Blood will tell. Did you think you had turned it to water by your Sunday-schools and primer books.

Mat. Rachel, think of the poor mother whose heart bleeds for her stolen child to-night. I don't care for my own life, but if all the innocent years you spent under my roof have left one good impulse in your heart, make that mother happy again.

Jim. Stuff! Let's have no more of that. Come, boys, let's finish the sermon. [*They advance, RAI. stays them.*]

Thors. [*Cocking the pistol.*] One shot at the first man that touches him.

Rai. [*To Jim. and Pad.*] Don't be a fool! Nor you neither. Let's have no blood for them to track us by. Take him below. That's the way to settle him.

• *Jim.* [*To men, who murmur.*] She's right! [*To Pad.*] Who's in the room below?

Pad. All the rest, armed and ready, watching the signal and ready for the police, with the kid.

Jim. Then the room below won't do. It's no use, Sally. We must give him a dose.

Rai. You shan't kill him.

Jim. Out of the way.

Rai. Jim, he was good to me.

Pad. Out of the way! [*They hurl Rai. aside.*]

Door opens and MABEL enters, disguised as Mother Thames. All stop.

Jim. What! Old Flighty! Back so soon? The woman?

Mabel. Coming.

Jim. Alone?

Mabel. Aye, my precious.

Jim. She's a plucky one. But I knew the bait would bring her. Now get into your room. We've accounts to settle, and you're in the way.

Mabel. [*Crosses to c.*] Yes, I'll go! Give me the baby!

Jim. Never you mind the baby! Get into your den!

Mabel. Oh, my poor baby! He isn't dead. I've had him in my arms all day—he isn't dead.

Pad. [*Seizing her and flinging her to R. H. corner.*] Stop your raving!

Jim. Curse me if Mother hasn't lost her voice and her wits together. Get to your room.

Rai. [*Aside to her, on her L.*] Oh, what brought you here?

Jim. What's this? [*Roughly seizing Rai. and flinging her aside.*] Get up! [*To Mabel, whom he flings down stage to L. c., near Mat.*] Where's the woman I sent you for?

Mabel. On the stairs, below! [*Commences to untie Mat's bonds and aside to him.*] Father! 'Tis I—Mabel!

Jim. [*To Pad.*] Bring her here. [*PAD. goes towards door at back.*] Now, boys—who'll finish this old fraud? What shall it be? Axe, or knife, or rope? [*They hold back. Tears paper at table, and writes on one.*] Here! we'll do the job by lot. The one that draws this wins the prize. Where's a hat? Give me a hat.

PAD. by this time opens the door, and CAPTAIN STANDISH steps in.

Standish. Scoundrels! You want a hat? [*Takes off cap.*] Take mine.

Jim. Betrayed! [*PAD. and RAI. exit precipitately at L.*]

Stan. Stir hand or foot and you are dead men. [*DYMPLE and POLICE appear behind him; JIM and the ruffians with PICK. BOB make a dash for the stairs. SAILORS, led by the DOCTOR, appear there.*]

Thors. Hurrah!

Mabel. [*Throws off disguise.*] My child! [*Cuts Mat's bonds and he springs up.*]

Dym. Beneath the pallet.

Mabel. The bed! [*JIM falls on his knees and raps on floor,*

as THORS. seizes him. MABEL runs to bed, which DYM. removes. They discover an open trap and no child.] He's gone!

Jim. Now find him if you can! The first that puts a foot to follow gets a bullet through his heart. [All fall back.]

Mabel. If no man dares go! let me!

Mat. No! No! [Holds her back.]

Stan. Scoundrel! [Hurts him to L.] Farewell! Mabel! My life for our child's! [Darts down trap. Pistols heard.]

CURTAIN.

ACT V.

SCENE.—Parlors at the Renfrew city residence. Night. Twenty-four hours have elapsed since the last Act. Chandelier lighted. MABEL is discovered lying on sofa, c., propped with cushions, her face buried in the pillow. DOCTOR GOSSITT walks up and down at back, in thought, his hands behind him. MARY is at table near the sofa, pouring from a vial into a small wine-glass a potion. THORSBY looks in at door, R. 1 E. MUSIC.

Thorsby. [In whisper to Mary, still on threshold.] Can I come in? [MARY puts up her finger in caution; puts vial on table, goes to Mabel, finds her apparently asleep, then comes down to Thors.]

Mary. [L.] Have you just got back?

Thors. Yes.

Mary. [Crosses to c.] We have been waiting so anxiously. [The conversation that ensues is carried on down c., so as not to disturb Mabel.]

Thors. The information we got was correct. The villains carried him across the river.

Doc. [L., coming down.] Arthur and his father have gone there!

DOROTHY enters from L. 1 E.

Dorothy. Ah, Mr. Gyll—what have you discovered?

Thors. [R.] They will soon know the worst.

Dor. The worst?

Thors. I'm afraid the report sent us this afternoon was true. Poor little Arthur!

Mary. Poor Mabel! [*Goes up to her.*]

Doc. I was afraid of it. Cold, exposure to the wintry night, brutal treatment, all have done their cruel work.

Dor. It is impossible. I won't believe it! [*To Thors.*] Have you seen your friend?

Thors. Sammy? Yes—for a moment! He just got a message from that girl—

Doc. Rachel! Humph! [*Turns off impatiently and goes up, stopping a moment to look at Mabel.*]

Thors. Yes—and he went off in search of her, expecting to bring her and the baby back together. [*DOR. shakes her head doubtfully and goes up to the Doc., as MARY returns to Thors.'s side.*] Does Mabel know—

Mary. She suspects the worst.

Thors. It will kill her.

Mary. I never was so miserable in all my life.

Thors. And to think that if it had only ended happily—you and I, Mary, would have been so happy, too. [*Takes her hand.*] But I can wait. For your sake I'd wait twenty years.

Mary. Don't let's speak of ourselves now.

Thors. [*Going towards R.*] And perhaps it's all my fault. I could have shot that villain a dozen times over.

Mary. But that would not have saved little Arthur. Their plans were too well taken.

Thors. All our trouble came to nothing.

Mary. You all did the best you could.

Thors. We did nothing at all, if all we did comes to nothing. [*They go off, R. 1 E., looking back at Mabel.*]

Dor. [*At back, to Doc.*] That's Arthur's step!

STANDISH enters, R. 1 E., hat and coat; quite dejected. DOR. runs to him as if to question; he sadly shakes his head. She goes off, L., handkerchief to her eyes. STAN. lays his hat and coat off.

Standish. [*To Doc.*] Has she slept any? [*Very low.*]

Doc. I hope so. She has not moved!

Mabel. [*Half raises her head.*] Who's there? Is that Arthur? [*STAN. presses the Doc.'s hand. DOC. goes off, R. door. STAN. comes down.*]

Stan. [*R.*] Mabel?

Mabel. You have come back—alone! [*He is about to speak.*] Don't speak. I understand! There is no hope! Arthur is dead. [*Sinks on sofa.*] My child is dead! [*STAN. approaches her.*]

Stan. My wife!

Mabel. [*Starting up in tears.*] It is I have done it—I have killed him.

Stan. [*Taking her hand.*] Mabel, an hour ago you were calm. You were prepared for the worst. Do you forget that I knelt by your side, and in our doubt and suspense we promised each other that if this new sorrow must be borne, we would bear it together.

Mabel. [*L. of him.*] Oh, my little one! I shall never—never see you again! [*Sinks on to seat.*]

Stan. [*Sinks on knee, gently.*] Mabel!

Mabel. It is pitiful, is it not—to have my baby suffer for me! I would have borne death—I did confront it in that den last night, with unfaltering courage—because I hoped to give him back to you. It is denied me. But they will bring him here—they will let me see my baby.

Stan. If you are able to bear this grief.

Mabel. Don't let them keep him from me. I have been punished enough. [*Rises.*]

Stan. Who speaks of punishment, my darling, my wife. Am I not here? Is not the past forever buried out of sight? Are we not reunited, never to part?

Mabel. [*Crosses to R.*] I dare not listen to your love and kindness. I dare not meet your glance, for it will ask me for what I have not to give. His life would be pardon—would be mercy—would be love—what have I to live for since I deserve neither pardon nor mercy.

Stan. We will live for each other, Mabel. Not despairing! Not hopeless! The remembrance of our child shall not be a gloom, but a joy to us. We will think of little Arthur as he used to be. At night the glimmer of a little face in the darkness will greet us. In sleep the soft fingers of your baby will press your bosom, and you will smile in your dream of happiness. And when we walk forth the flowers opening their blossoms to the sky, will point to his true resting place, and teach us what happiness may spring from grief.

Mabel. Oh! my little one! My little one! [*In a flood of tears she buries her head on his shoulder.*]

DOROTHY *entering*, L. U. E.

Dorothy. Tears! Blessed tears! They will soon wash away her sorrow. Let me take her to her room, Arthur! come, my darling! [*All exeunt, L. door.*]

DYMPLE *entering cautiously*, R. 1 E.

Dymple. No one here! [*Looks around cautiously.*] I'm glad of that. I wouldn't have Thorsby see me for the world. Came in by the basement way to avoid him. Here! [*Turns to door and speaks off.*] Come in! [*Impatient.*] Come in!

RAITCH *appears dressed neatly in the frock of third act, new boots, etc., hair very tidy.* DYM. *grasps her hand.*

Raitch. [*As he pulls her.*] Oh!

Dym. Don't mind my holding on to you. You're our best bower anchor now—and I'm afraid of your slipping the cable and drifting away.

Rai. If you please, I won't drift away.

Dym. Perhaps not. But luck has taken so many turns lately that I can't trust even myself. You're an important person now, Rachel. Principal witness for the prosecution. You can identify every one of the rascals, and you can prove they dosed the baby with drugs.

Rai. Yes. I couldn't even prevent that.

Dym. Perhaps it's as well—for you made Padder and his mates believe he was dead when he slept so long, and so Padder and the rest deserted you in a fright—and you sent word to the police and me—and so the baby is found.

Rai. Mayn't I see Miss Dorothy now?

Dym. In a moment.—I say. You're not in a hurry to get rid of me, are you?

Rai. Oh, no indeed, Mr. Dymple. You are so good and so clever. You found out the paper I put in the frock—and you came and found out me!

Dym. Yes, I did—I found you out—you see I've been thinking of you.

Rai. Of me?

Dym. Don't you know you saved my life up there in the attie—last night? when you called me a rat?

Rai. You know why, now!

Dym. I began to think of you then. And when the wretches in the room below carried off the baby—you followed them—in the cold and snow—with nothing on worth thinking about! Do you know what you are, Rachel? [*Puts his arm around her waist.*]

Rai. No, sir!

Dym. A heroine! If you were in a book everybody would fall in love with you. As it is—I love you! [*Kisses her.*]

Rai. Please, sir.

Dym. Please? What, *more*?

Rai. That's very wrong.

Dym. What's very wrong?

Rai. To kiss me!

Dym. How old are you?

Rai. Sixteen!

Dym. [*All right, kisses her again.*] Then it'll not be wrong for a couple of years yet.

Rai. Please let me go!

Dym. Rachel, I want to ask you something! Don't be frightened—I want you to promise me something. When you are eighteen years old, Rachel, I want you to marry me.

Rai. [*Swinging hands to and fro.*] Oh, sir—I couldn't.

Dym. You don't know what you can do when you're eighteen.

Rai. [*Turning away.*] No, no—I couldn't if I was eighty.

Dym. Why not?

Rai. I am only a poor girl and very ignorant.

Dym. I'll put you to school, and if in two years you are not as accomplished, as intelligent, and as good as any young lady in the land, I won't marry you—I'll eat you!

Rai. Oh, I couldn't—Miss Dorothy'd be angry.

Dym. Miss Dorothy shall be your aunt by marriage. She's mine now. I adopted her yesterday.

Rai. No—it's impossible. I'd do any thing in the world to make you happy, but it's impossible.

Dym. Impossible?

Rai. Yes, sir, please.

Dym. [*Angrily.*] I believe there ain't a woman in the world, high or low, will have me. It's a conspiracy among the sex! Look here, Rachel—

Rai. I can't, sir, it's impossible!

Dym. Rachel, in the adjoining apartment there is a perjured villain, who is at this moment sitting with his arm around the waist of a young and beautiful creature. He's going to marry her. He's happy! You wouldn't see a perjured villain happy, and me miserable, would you?

Rai. Oh, no, indeed!

Dym. Then I tell you what I'll do. Promise me, and I'll speak to Aunt Dorothy. She'll take charge of you, and in two years— [*Hugs her.*]

Rai. There's somebody coming!

Dym. Let 'em come!

Kisses her as RAYMOND and LUCILLE enter, R. U. E., and stop, seeing the kiss.

Raymond. Hollo! [*RAI. screams and runs out, R. 1 E.*] I say—it's young Pimple, kissing the girl.

Dym. Dymple, sir—not Pimple!

Lucille. [*Crosses to C.*] My dear Mr. Dymple, what news have you got for us? These weddings are such a bother, and I've been out all the afternoon shopping for mine. Mabel was asleep when I went out, and everybody was so sad and quiet, I felt more like preparing for a funeral than a marriage. But, of course, Mabel is welcome to every comfort my house affords—and her dear little baby—any further news of dear, little Arthur?

Dym. Oh, you'll see him, soon, Mrs. Renfrew; his grandfather is bringing him.

Luc. He's found, then? That's so nice!

Dym. Yes, he's found, safe and sound, too—after a good, long sleep. [*Aside, going out.*] They are going to be married, are they? I wish 'em joy. [*Exits, R. 1 E.*]

Luc. [*L., to Ray.*] You must be good to everybody, now, you naughty boy, that we're going to be married.

Ray. [*Quizzically.*] Yes, the long agony is over.

Luc. What long agony? Do you refer to our courtship?

Ray. No, dear, to the doubt and suspense in which I have been kept for these years, by your fickleness.

Luc. You mean by your own procrastination, my love. It's only within a week or two that you've actually urged me to name the day. It's well you did, you naughty fellow—for I actually began to think you were waiting for me to ask you.

Ray. Why didn't you? It would have been so deliciously original and novel. As it is, there's nothing original about our marriage—not even the bride, for she's a widow.

Luc. And I'm sure you're as bad. You can't deny you've made love to a dozen.

Ray. No, I can't deny it. Nobody would believe me. [*Strokes his moustache. Crosses L.*]

Luc. Oh! If you were not so vain.

Ray. Can't help being vain. You've accepted me as your future husband.

Luc. [*Tartly.*] There, there! a truce! You always get the best of me when you begin your compliments. But mind! [*Tapping him sweetly on cheek with her fan.*] I don't believe one of them.

DOROTHY enters, R. 1 E., *agitated and breathless, followed by RAITCH.*

Dorothy. [*Crosses to c.*] Oh, sir, where is Arthur?

Ray. Captain Standish? can't say.

Dor. I have such news for him.

Luc. What news?

Dor. His child alive, and well.

Luc. Mr. Dymple just told us.

Dor. But Arthur believes—they told him—

Luc. What?

Dor. That his child was found, but dead.

DOCTOR GOSSITT enters *quickly, followed by DYMPLÉ*, R. 1 E.

Doctor. [*To Dor.*] Have you seen him?

Ray. [*To Dor.*] Captain Standish believes his child dead? and Mabel, too?

STANDISH appears at L. U. E.

Standish. What is the matter? What has happened? [*In low, anxious voice.*] Have they brought him back?

Doc. [*Crosses to L., advancing.*] Arthur, are you able to bear good news?

Stan. [*Looks from one to the other.*] Good news?

Ray. [*Frankly advancing and restraining Doc.*] Doctor, I have a favor to ask of you. Captain Standish has reason to think bitterly enough of me. I wish to be remembered by him in connection with the happiest moment of his life, and I beg you to let me be the first to tell him—[*As he turns to Stan.*] that his child is alive and well.

Stan. [*L. c., supporting himself against sofa, and in a hoarse whisper.*] My child is alive?

Doc. The report of his death was false, founded on a natural mistake.

Stan. Do you believe this? [*Looking from one to the other.*] All of you?

Rai. [*Coming forward.*] I know it!

Stan. Rachel! Then it is true!

THORSEY and MARY enter, R. 1. E., *in excitement.*

Mary. Arthur, have you heard!

Thors. The good news?

Mary. They are coming!

Stan. [*Runs to L. U. D. and calls, agitatedly.*] Mabel.

Doc. [*Stops him.*] For Heaven's sake.

Stan. I must tell her.

Doc. In that fashion? No, no, come back. The news must be broken gently. She has suffered too much. Sudden joy sometimes kills.

Dor. But Matthew is coming. He may be even now at the door. [*Runs up to window, c.*]

Doc. Run and keep him back. [*THORS. and MARY dart out, R.*] Who will tell her? Not you. [*To Stan.*] I have it. Rachel. The sight of her is half the glad tidings told. Stay here, Rachel. And all of you go. Go with me, Arthur. [*Exit STAN. into door, R. U. E.*] Come, my boy. [*Ring heard at door.*]

Dor. It is Matthew.

Doc. Go to him. [*DOR. exits, R. 1 E.*] Now all of you.

DYM., who has been whispering to RAI., kisses her, exits with a wink at her, L. 1 E., followed by LUC. and RAY. DOC. goes off, R. U. E., as MABEL appears, L. U. E. MUSIC.

Mabel. Arthur! Did you call? [*Comes down.*] No one here? I thought I heard his voice calling to me, and in a tone so strange and loud. Is it fancy—am I then becoming crazed with this great sorrow? [*RAI. has crept forward and kneels softly at her side, and takes her dress in her hand.*] Who is this? Rachel!

Rai. [*R., kneels.*] Yes, it is I—it is I, Miss Mabel. Don't look at me so sorrowfully. I have come back to you.

Mabel. [*Looks around eagerly.*] Alone!

Rai. No—no—no! Not alone! You don't believe I would come back without little Arthur! I was with him every day—every minute. I wouldn't let them touch him when I could help it—for I had promised the little angels in heaven to protect him—so he is coming.

Mabel. They are bringing him to me.

Rai. He is coming. Oh, Miss Mabel, don't you understand—would anybody hurt a little child?

Mabel. [*In a frenzy of agitation.*] Rachel! do you know what you are telling my heart? You are telling me of hope—to expect—

Rai. Yes, Miss Mabel—to hope for joy! To expect your greatest happiness. Oh, Miss Mabel, they are at the door. Don't start back—don't cry out—he may be asleep.

Mabel. Arthur, where are you?

STANDISH enters, R. 1 D.

Standish. My darling!

Mabel. My child?

MATTHEW appears at R. U. D., holding LITTLE ARTHUR aloft in his arms. The child's arms are outstretched. All enter.

THORSBY and MARY, R. 1 E. DOROTHY and DOCTOR, R. U. E. DYMPLER, LESSING and LUCILLE, L. 1 E.

Child. Mamma!

Mabel. My baby! [*With a cry of joy she rushes towards it.*

MAT. meets her half-way and places the child in her arms. She sinks on her knees to clasp it and cover it with kisses.]

Stan. Father! [MAT. and STAN. embrace.]

Mat. Joy—joy, my son. No happier day can my old eyes ever see. There! poor mother, clasp your child. Safe and sound. Thanks to Providence, and under Providence to her.

Mabel. Rachel! [RAI. kneels by the baby and kisses him and Mabel's hand.] Father! [Taking his hand.] Arthur! [STAN. raises her, she sits on sofa, c., with the child, and a group forms about her.]

Mat. If there's an enemy in the world, I forgive him. I could take by the hand the veriest seamp in the universe. [Sees RAY., and suddenly comes forward and grasps his hand.] Ah! Mr. Lessing!

Ray. Thanks! I'm sure you're very good. But I've reformed. I'm going to be married. Retribution has overtaken me. [Takes LUC.'s hand in his arm.]

Mat. I wish you joy. Everybody ought to be married, now. We couldn't celebrate our happiness better than by a wedding.

Thors. [Advancing, stepping forward with Mary.] Do you think so, sir? then of course you'll consent to—

Mat. What you? With all my heart. Take her. She's a good girl! and—who else?

Dym. [Takes RAI.'s hand.] Who else? We.

Mat. You will marry Rachel!

Dym. This day two years. I'll order the cards to-morrow.

PADDER enters at R. 1 E., and beckons on RAGMONEY JIM.

Mabel. [Seeing them.] Those men! [Clasps her child.] Arthur.

Doe. Those scoundrels here?

Padder. Don't forget us in the general joy. Don't forget I

was the means of restoring the precious babby. I cleared out so as Sally could send word where he was this morning—

Jim. And I would have done it myself if I could.

Pad. Any little remuneration you feels like giving us for our good intentions will be werry acceptable.

Jim. The winter's on us—and—

Stan. [C.] Why, you scoundrels, did I not see you both lodged in prison?

Jim. We was bailed out this arternoon!

Mat. You shall not escape.

Jim. Oh, yes we will. We has a good lawyer and a good defence.

Doc. Defence?

Jim. Yes, sir! Emotional insanity. I lost a babby myself some years ago, and ever since I've had a hankering arter other peoples—

Dym. [*Advancing to him.*] Get out.

Pad. Sir, think of our former relations.

Dym. Get out! Thorsby! [*THORS. goes to him.*]

Pad. Oh, very well, if you treats us that way.

Jim. We wishes you good evening!

Pad. Ditto! Ditto! [*An officer appears at R. 1 E. and beckons them off.*]

Mat. Can they escape?

Doc. Don't be afraid of that. I see twenty years apiece written on both their faces. No. Let us now think only of the happiness we have here.

Mabel. Yes. 'A happiness that begins to-night for me— [*Takes Stan.'s hand.*] and that will endure while heart can beat, or life can last. Father! [*To Mat.*] To-morrow you will take us home.

[CURTAIN.]

MABEL.

MATTHEW. CHILD. STANDISH.

DOCTOR. LESSING.

DOROTHY. LUCILLE.

THORSBY. DYMPL.

MARY. RAITCH.

PIQUE.

A PLAY OF TO-DAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

AUGUSTIN DALY.

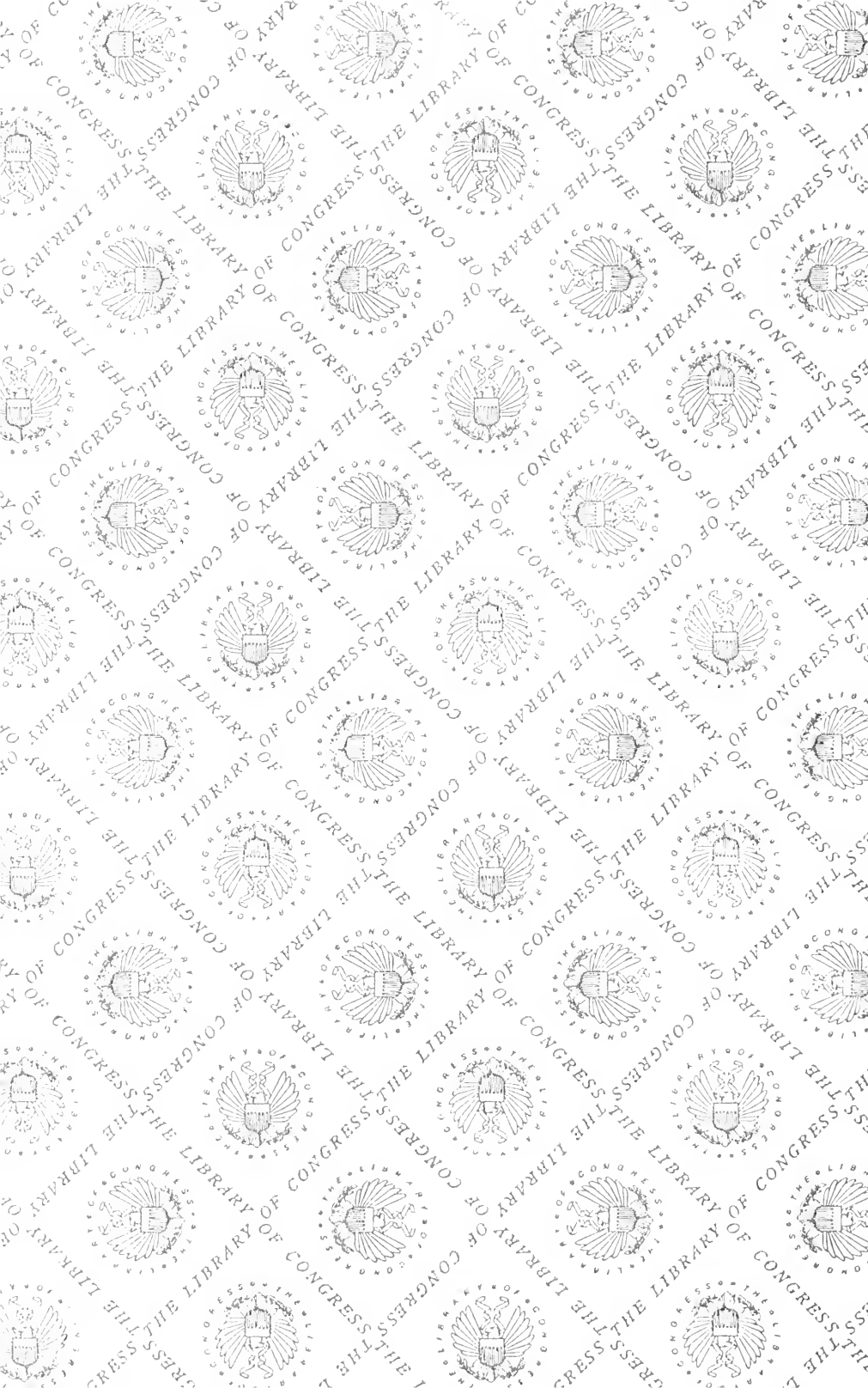
AS ACTED AT DALY'S NEW FIFTH AVENUE THEATRE FOR
THE FIRST TIME, DECEMBER 14TH, 1875.

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